



The California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative

**A Blueprint for Institutionalizing Civic Learning to
Prepare ALL Students for Civic Life in the 21st Century**

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Prepare ALL Students for Civic Life in the 21st Century

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**Los Angeles County
Office of Education**

Serving Students ■ Supporting Communities
Leading Educators

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Chapter

Civic Learning: *Now, more than ever*

- a. Our Current Challenge
 - 2014 NAEP Scores for History, Geography, and Civics
 - Who is Voting? Who is Not?
- b. What is Civic Learning?
- c. The Benefits of Civic Learning



Introduction

Chapter 1 – Civic Learning: Now, more than ever

Our Current Challenge

At a time when our nation is confronted with complex issues never seen before, our nation's policymakers are making decisions that will impact the lives of all Americans for decades to come. And yet, study after study reports that Americans are becoming more distrustful of government institutions, politicians, and democracy in general. Cynicism, frustration, and skepticism have led to increased disengagement of citizens in civic arenas and low voter turnout, particularly among young people.

At the close of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, a woman approached the eldest delegate, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, outside Independence Hall. She asked whether the framers had created a monarchy or a republic. In reply, he told her that the new nation would be “a republic, if you can keep it.”

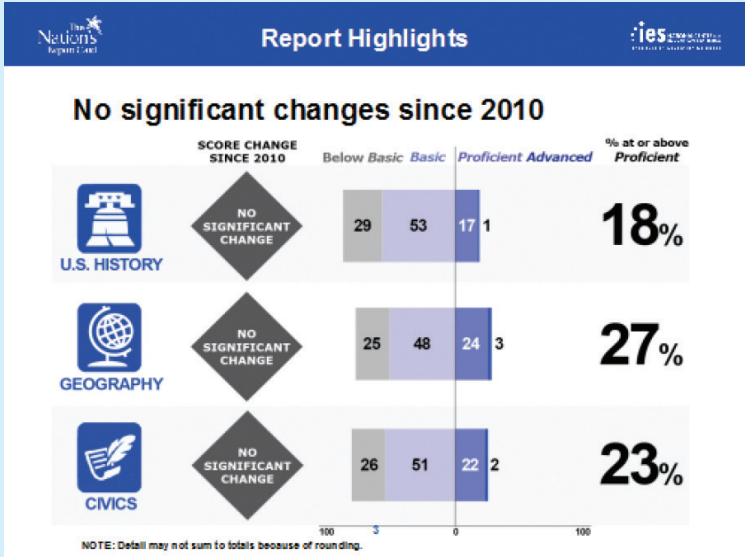
If something is not done soon to reverse the current trend, we may very likely be unable to “keep it.” The dismal state of civic engagement among adults is alarming. The future is even more dire when we examine the potential of our young people as future citizens.

2014 NAEP Scores for History, Geography and Civics

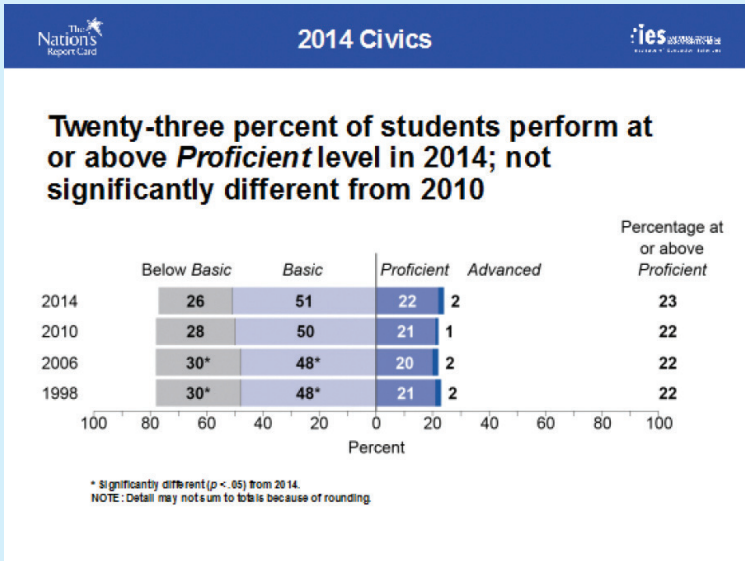
In the spring of 2015, the National Assessment Governing Board released the results of the National Assessment for Educational Progress, also known as the NAEP scores for history, geography, and civics.¹ More than 29,000 eighth-graders across the country participated in the 2014 NAEP assessments. Each student responded to multiple-choice and constructed-response (open-ended) questions in one of the three subjects.

U.S. history questions measured students' knowledge of American history in the context of four major themes: Democracy, Culture, Technology, and World Role. Geography questions measured the knowledge of geography in three content areas: Space and Place, Environment and Society, Spatial Dynamics and Connections. Civics questions measured students' knowledge and skills related to five essential content areas about government and society.

¹ National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) U.S. History, Geography, and Civics 2014 Findings, http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/hgc_2014/



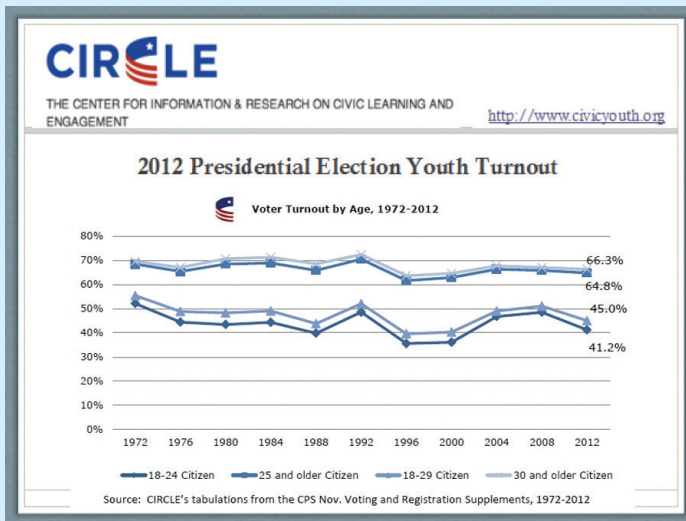
The results were not good. Only 18% of the students assessed in U.S. History scored at proficient or above. For geography, only 27% scored at proficient or above and in civics, only 23% of students tested scored proficient or above. What does it say about our students, our schools, and the future of our democracy when roughly three-fourths of students do not have a proficient knowledge of our nation's past, do not understand how geography impacts our world, or have the basic knowledge and skills to engage in democratic processes established by our founding fathers so many years ago?



Looking at the results over time, the findings are even more discouraging. Despite great work of educators to adopt and implement outstanding civic learning programs, there is virtually NO change in the scores for civics since 2010, since 2006 or since 1998. Hence, scores are not only low, there is very little growth over time. When comparing scores among students who are white, Hispanic, and black, students who are white scored the highest by wide margins revealing an alarming civic achievement gap.

Who is Voting? Who is Not?

CIRCLE, the Center for Information & Research on Civic learning and Engagement, a nonpartisan, independent, academic research center of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University examined youth voter turnout data during recent presidential elections. Younger citizens are voting at far lower rates than older citizens. Furthermore, 45% of young people, ages 18-29, voted in 2012, down from 51% in 2008.²



When looking at mid-term elections, the news is no better. Presidential elections tend to draw more eligible voters out to the polls and yet, Congressional elections also have a tremendous impact on policies put in place at the federal level. The CIRCLE report reveals that the 2014 Youth Voter turn out was the lowest ever recorded for a mid-term election.

Though voting is only one indicator of civic engagement, it serves as a barometer to inform the work that needs to be done to prepare the next generation to become informed, engaged citizens. Civic learning can and must be prioritized in our schools if we want to preserve, protect, and sustain our democratic way of life. Understanding what civic learning is, how to implement it in schools, and how to sustain it, is our challenge.

² CIRCLE Staff, The Youth Vote in 2012, The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement, May 2013

What is Civic Learning?

In 2003 a coalition of scholars and practitioners formalized the requirements of competent and responsible citizens in the Civic Mission of Schools Report.³ According to that report, competent and responsible citizens share four common traits:

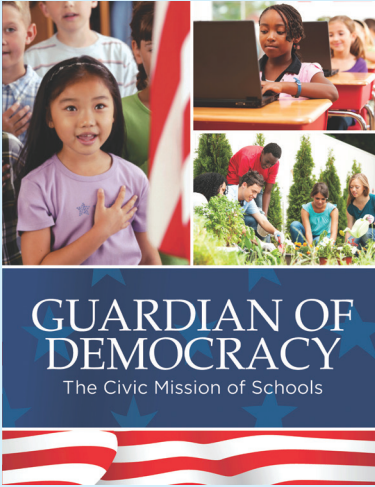
- **Informed and thoughtful.** *They have a grasp and an appreciation of history and the fundamental processes of American democracy, an understanding and awareness of public and community issues, an ability to obtain information when needed, a capacity to think critically, and a willingness to enter into dialogue with others about different points of view and to understand diverse perspectives. They are tolerant of ambiguity and resist simplistic answers to complex questions.*
- **Participate in their communities.** *They belong to and contribute to groups in civil society that offer venues for Americans to participate in public service; work together to overcome problems; and pursue an array of cultural, social, political, and religious interests and beliefs.*
- **Act politically.** *They have the skills, knowledge, and commitment needed to accomplish public purposes – for instance, by organizing people to address social issues, solving problems in groups, speaking in public, petitioning and protesting to influence public policy, and voting.*
- **Moral and civic virtues.** *They are concerned for the rights and welfare of others, socially responsible, willing to listen to alternative perspectives, confident in their capacity to make a difference, and ready to contribute personally to civic and political action. They strike a reasonable balance between their own interests and the common good. They recognize the importance of and practice civic duties such as voting and respecting the rule of law.*

In order for young people to attain these competencies, it is necessary for schools to intentionally focus on enhancing the three pillars of good citizenship – civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

- **Civic Knowledge** relies on a fundamental understanding of the history and principles of our Constitution, the structure of government, and the processes by which government passes laws and enacts policies to meet the needs of the populace.
- **Civic Skills** include the ability to seek and analyze multiple points of views and be able to listen and engage in civil dialogue about controversial issues. It involves the ability to think critically about current issues, work collaboratively to find solutions, and take collective, productive action.

³ *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*, The Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, civicmissionofschools.org

- **Civic Dispositions** refer to a sense of self-efficacy – the feeling that a person wants to, can, and will take action to make a difference in the lives of others. Voting in elections, attending community meetings, and working with policymakers to address public issues are among the many ways citizens are actively engaged when they have the interest and will to participate.



There are a number of instructional approaches for attaining these outcomes for students. The **Guardian of Democracy** Report outlines six practices that, together, have proven to provide a well-rounded civic learning experience for young people.⁴

1. **Classroom Instruction:** Schools should provide instruction in government, history, economics, law, and democracy.
2. **Discussion of Current Events and Controversial Issues:** Schools should incorporate discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events into the classroom, particularly those that young people view as important to their lives.
3. **Service-Learning:** Schools should design and implement programs that provide students with the opportunity to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction.
4. **Extracurricular Activities:** Schools should offer opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities outside of the classroom.
5. **School Governance:** Schools should encourage student participation in school governance.
6. **Simulations of Democratic Processes:** Schools should encourage students to participate in simulations of democratic processes and procedures.

⁴ *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*, The Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, civicmissionofschoools.org

The Benefits of Civic Learning

There is ample research that identifies a number of benefits of civic learning as part of a well-rounded education for students.

Civic Competencies

First and foremost, civic learning promotes civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions – research makes clear that students who received high-quality civic learning are more likely than their counterparts to understand public issues, view political engagement as a means of addressing communal challenges, and participate in civic activities. Civic learning has similarly been shown to promote civic equality. Poor, minority, urban, or rural students who receive high-quality civic learning perform considerably higher than their counterparts, demonstrating the possibility of civic learning to fulfill the ideal of civic equality.⁵

Furthermore, students who receive effective civic learning are:

- More likely to vote and discuss politics at home
- Four times more likely to volunteer and work on community issues
- More confident in their ability to speak publicly and communicate with their elected representatives.⁶

Student Achievement

The American public and business community are keenly interested in youth developing the competencies necessary to thrive in a changing global economy. Civic learning not only enhances knowledge of economic and political processes, but supports college and career readiness through opportunities for youth to apply academic concepts in real-world settings, work collaboratively in teams, and engage with professional role models.⁷

School Climate

Civic learning builds a positive school climate, which in turn has a positive impact on a wide range of outputs for students, ranging from academic achievement to personal character. Research shows that providing opportunities to engage in civic learning teaches the importance of community (both within the school and more broadly). Respectful dialogue about controversial issues is foundational to a positive school climate. The benefits of civic learning in one classroom can help shape the norms of other classrooms and the school more broadly.

⁵ *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*, The Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, civicismionofschools.org

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ Judith Torney-Purta and Britt S. Wilkenfeld. "Paths to 21st Century Competencies Through Civic Education Classrooms: An Analysis of Survey Results from Ninth-Graders." Washington, D.C.: Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools and American Bar Association Division for Public Education, 2009. Accessed from CIRCLE via <http://www.civicyouth.org/?p=360>

Student Engagement and Reducing the Dropout Rate

Civic learning provides compelling, motivating, and challenging experiences that can keep kids in school. Civic learning, beginning in elementary and middle school with a focus on civic responsibility, is directly tied to a student's propensity to drop out of high school.⁸

More than 80% of students who drop out indicate that they would have been more likely to stay in school if they had more opportunities to participate in experiential learning.⁹ In particular, taking courses that require community service and participating in student government have been found to predict high school graduation and college attendance and success.¹⁰

Implementation of Common Core State Standards

Civic learning naturally supports the college and career readiness skills and abilities called for by Common Core State Standards (CCSS), especially in English Language Arts. For example, CCSS prioritizes comprehension and use of complex texts, and our Constitution and Bill of Rights are excellent content for such skill development. CCSS calls for the capacity to analyze a problem and to communicate purposefully both orally and in writing, which can be achieved through simulations of democratic processes such as classroom mock trials. Including History-Social Science teachers in CCSS professional development can facilitate integration of civic learning and common core.



⁸ Charlane Fay Starks. "Connecting Civic Education to Civil Right and Responsibility: A Strategy for Reducing High School Dropout Among African American Students." 2010. Accessed via www.csus-dspace.calstate.edu/xmlui/handle/10211.9/512

⁹ The Silent Epidemic. Accessed via <https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/Documents/TheSilentEpidemic3-06FINAL.pdf>

¹⁰ Alberto Dávila and Marie Mora. "CIRCLE Working Paper 52: Civic Engagement and High School Academic Progress: An Analysis Using NELS Data." 2007. Accessed via www.civicyouth.org/circleworking-paper-52-civic-engagementand-high-school-academic-progress-ananalysis-using-nels-data

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Chapter

The California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative

- a. Goal of the Initiative
- b. Civic Learning Practices
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- d. A Systemic Approach
- e. Program Implementation
 - The Application Process
 - Phases of Implementation
- f. Outcomes and Accomplishments
 - Implementation of Structural Supports
 - Schoolwide Institutionalization
 - Schoolwide Sustainability
 - Student Learning Outcomes



Chapter 2 – The California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative

Goal of the Initiative

There is hardly a teacher, school administrator, parent, or policymaker who will deny that every one of our students needs to understand and embrace their role as future citizens to ensure that our American democracy is sustained, strengthened and valued. But attaining that goal is another story. We are all familiar with the “professional development shotgun effect” when only a few teachers from a school attend a workshop or conference. They often come back enthusiastic and begin implementing what they have learned. The students lucky to be in their classroom benefit greatly but many others do not.

At the Los Angeles County Office of Education a program was developed to institutionalize high quality civic learning so that ALL students will graduate high school with the competencies to be informed, engaged citizens. Funded by the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation with support from the Los Angeles County Education Foundation, the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative was a three-year project that engaged ten high schools in Los Angeles County and two high schools in Orange County.

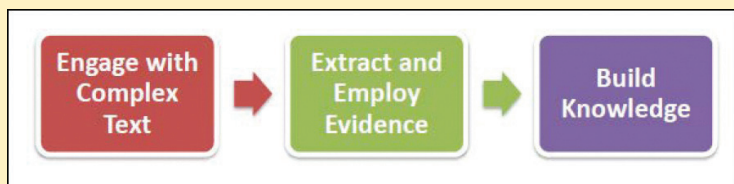
The goal was for all students in each of these schools to participate in a high quality civic inquiry and investigation at least once in their high school career. It required schools to integrate the five components of high quality civic learning as described below, across an entire grade span through a required course of study; not as an elective option. Schools were given flexibility to integrate civic learning in any subject matter and across any grade level.

Civic Learning Practices

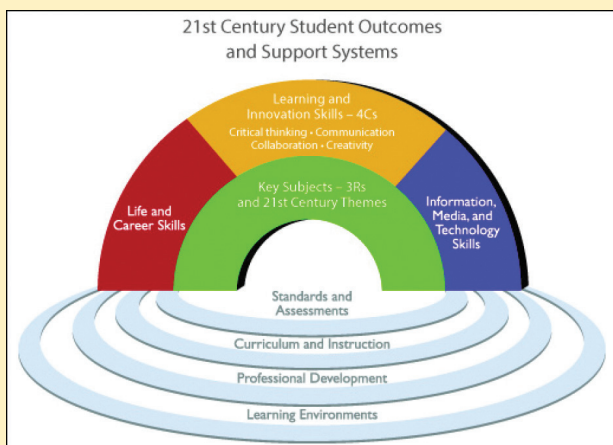
The California Democracy School approach to civic learning was envisioned as a confluence of a number of current instructional approaches described below. All four of these educational initiatives, together, provide the context, structure and instructional practices to prepare all students for college, career, and civic life.



- **The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts** calls upon students to regularly engage with complex informational text and academic language; to extract and employ evidence from informational reading, writing, speaking and listening; and build knowledge through content rich nonfiction. When students study, discuss, and take action on real world issues, they are employing many of the skills described in the Common Core.



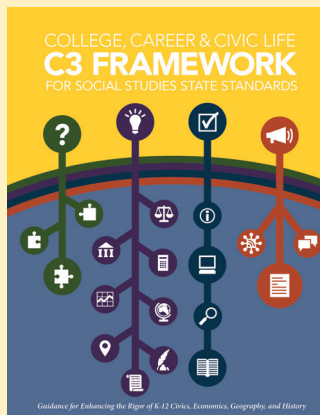
- **The Partnership for 21st Century Learning** serves as catalyst for building collaborative partnerships among education, business, community, and government leaders so that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in a world where change is constant and learning never stops. A focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration is essential to prepare students for the future. These “4 C’s” and the student outcomes (as represented in the arches of the rainbow) in the Framework for 21st Century Learning illustrate the knowledge and skills students need to succeed in work, life and citizenship.



- **The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools** engages 60+ coalition partners to bring about changes in local, state, and national policy to promote civic learning and implement the recommendations in the Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools report. The report reflects a broad consensus among scholars and practitioners on the major challenges confronting civic learning, research based practices that are proven to effectively provide civic learning

and recommendations for policymakers, educators, and all Americans. Several of the “Six Proven Practices” described earlier are embedded in the California Democracy School Initiative.

- **The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards** published by the National Council for the Social Studies in 2013 is an inquiry-based approach to social studies that provides students with the content and skills to become responsible, engaged citizens through four dimensions of practice.
 - *Dimension One* asks teachers to begin each social studies lesson with a compelling question; a question that is intellectually meaty, relevant and interesting to students, and will compel them to investigate a myriad of answers and solutions.
 - *Dimension Two* calls for students to dig into the content of history, civics, economics, and geography to search for answers. Any complex issue, past or present should spark the need to examine political implications, historical themes and event, economic impact, and the influence of geography on decisions and events that occur.
 - *Dimension Three* emphasizes the need for students to gather and evaluate a variety of sources, analyze them and develop claims based on the evidence discovered. Students are encouraged to communicate and critique their conclusions in a variety of ways – speaking, writing, and using media.
 - *Dimension Four* calls for students to “take informed action” by applying what they have learned to events and circumstances in the real world today. Migration, immigration, civil rights, political conflicts, economic and environmental disasters are very complex issues today, just as they were in the past.



The Civic Learning Inquiry and Investigation Model

The California Democracy School Initiative adopted a civic inquiry and investigation approach to civic learning for the twelve schools modeled after the four dimensions of the C3 Framework and informed by the other educational initiatives described above. The process begins with a **civic inquiry** that frames a public problem or issue that is relevant to students and can lead to civic action. This leads to **research and investigation** led by students to identify multiple perspectives of the causes and implications of the identified issue. From there, students engage in **civil dialogue** that reveals information, pro and con arguments and evidence to support a conclusion. The last step allows students to strengthen their “civic muscles” by **taking informed civic action** based on their deep analysis of the issue and the various implications of the public policy solution they propose.



School teams were provided intensive professional development followed by individual coaching and technical support to learn how to implement the five components in their classrooms as described in detail below.

1. **Inquiry** Like the C3 Framework, teachers begin their civic inquiry and investigation with a “civic inquiry” that:
 - is clear, specific, authentic, and manageable
 - addresses a problem that is authentic and relevant to students
 - actively engages students in the development stage
 - develops creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills
 - will develop cognitive and participatory skills of students to result in students’ taking informed civic action in the form of policy or direct service

2. **Investigation** Once an inquiry is established, we want students to conduct an investigation that
 - compels them to delve into content areas to apply disciplinary knowledge and concepts
 - focuses on a variety of perspectives or points of view from traditional and non-traditional sources including centers of power and influence
 - compels students to seek out evidence from multiple sources
 - engages all students in opportunities to evaluate sources, analyze information or make conclusions
 - is intentionally targeted to respond to the Inquiry Question and does not digress from the topic
 - intentionally develops creativity, collaboration, communication, or critical thinking skills
 - requires the use of technology or digital media

3. **Civil Dialogue** It is critically important for students to engage in dialogue about controversial issues as noted in the Guardian of Democracy report. Providing safe spaces for students to practice this skill is vitally important for them and for the future of our democracy.

Teachers were trained in the use of Philosophical Chairs, Socratic Seminar, and Structured Academic Controversy techniques to promote civil dialogue that

- values all viewpoints
- is civil and respectful at all times
- reflects a great deal of preparation in advance from the facilitator and participants
- demonstrates use of academic language
- relies heavily on evidence from research and multiple sources
- is led by a facilitator but primarily delivered by participants
- allows adequate time to explore a particular idea before moving to another point
- is intentionally designed to make all participants feel comfortable
- prompts questions that are authentic and refer back to previous points made in the discussion
- is monitored and “owned” by the entire group

4. **Communicating Conclusions** Once students have investigated an issue, analyzed the information, listened to differing viewpoints, they are guided to reach a conclusion that

- is reached through a collaborative process
- is based on relevant information based on evidence
- reflects an analysis of multiple perspectives by acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of claims and counterclaims
- is communicated clearly with language that is appropriate and compelling
- demonstrates proficient use of academic language and conventions
- is communicated in multiple formats (i.e. writing, oral presentation, multi-media presentations) to a variety of audiences within and outside the school (i.e. student peers, teachers, administrators, families, community members, policymakers, legislators)
- is compelling and constructed to influence or persuade constituencies with various needs and perspectives

5. **Taking Informed Action** Once conclusions are made, students apply what they have learned by taking informed action. This is where they practice their civic skills and apply their civic knowledge to impact policies that will solve real problems. Taking informed action

- applies democratic procedures to address the issue in a strategic manner to a variety of audiences
- is based on an extensive inquiry and investigative process for understanding the causes and characteristics of an issue, analysis of a variety of democratic strategies and procedures, and assessment of the challenges and opportunities faced by those who have tried to address the issue over time and place
- utilizes a variety of tools and innovative formats to promote action (i.e. multi-media) presentations, petitions, online
- includes dedicated time for students to reflect on the process and outcomes

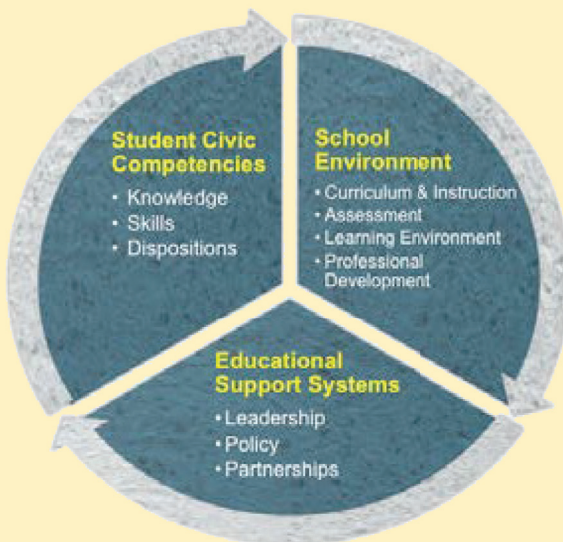
Students can take informed action in a variety of ways. They can

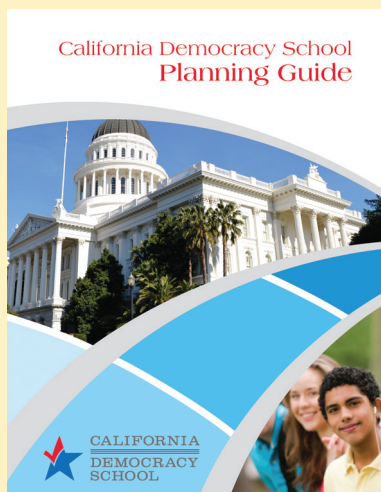
- use social media to circulate a message
- write a letter to an official
- circulate a petition
- create and disseminate a leaflet to the public
- start a service organization in the community
- generate an idea for legislation and propose it to a policymaker or governing body

A Systemic Approach

The process for institutionalizing civic learning was modeled after similar approaches for implementing schoolwide initiatives. The California Democracy School Initiative focused on three key areas:

- Student Civic Competencies** It was important for schools to identify civic outcomes for students. They needed to prioritize and systemize approaches to help students understand and embrace the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they need to become informed, responsible and actively engaged citizens.
- School Environment** Asking schools to institutionalize civic learning across an entire grade span challenged them to think critically about the curriculum and instruction that needed to be developed and delivered to students. Educators needed to think about how civic competencies would be assessed through formative and summative classroom measures. Learning environments needed to be conducive to collaborative work and dialogue. And finally, professional development was needed to train teachers with ongoing coaching and technical support.
- Educational Support Systems** The success of any initiative is highly dependent on educational leaders who are committed to promoting, facilitating, modeling, and supporting the implementation process. This includes the delivery of curriculum and instruction, professional development for teachers, school and/or district policy to guarantee long term sustainability, engagement with families and community partners, innovative approaches, and ongoing collaboration across the school, district and state to build capacity.





The California Democracy School Planning Guide modeled after the Mile Guide produced by the Partnership for 21st Century Learning was developed to provide schools with recommended steps for implementing the California Democracy School project and a rubric to guide a self-inventory of progress toward full implementation.

The Guide, Classroom Observation Form, and Rubric can be found at www.lacoe.edu/californiademocracyschool.

Program Implementation

The Application Process

Informational meetings held in different geographic locations invited teachers and school administrators to learn about the Initiative and the opportunity to participate. The application described the services to be provided by the initiative and the role and responsibility of participating schools.

Services Provided by the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative

- 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 Participating Schools

- 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.

Schools were required to submit a narrative 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?*

Finally, to ensure ongoing support throughout the program, approval and sign-off was required of the school site principal, district superintendent, school board president, and a representative of the parent/family community (i.e. PTA, School Site Council).

Twelve high schools were admitted into the program representing diverse student populations, geographic locations, and a variety of school settings including comprehensive high schools, a continuation high school and a school for incarcerated girls at a juvenile camp facility.

Bellflower Middle School/High School

Bellflower Unified School District

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo High School

Long Beach Unified School District

Cesar Chavez Continuation School

Compton Unified School District

Culver City High School

Culver City Unified School District

Glendale High School

Glendale Unified School District

Loara High School

Anaheim Union High School District

Pomona High School

Pomona Unified School District

Road to Success Academy

Camp Scott and Scudder

Los Angeles County Office of Education

Santa Monica High School

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District

Savanna High School

Anaheim Union High School District

Village Academy High School

Pomona Unified School District

William Workman High School

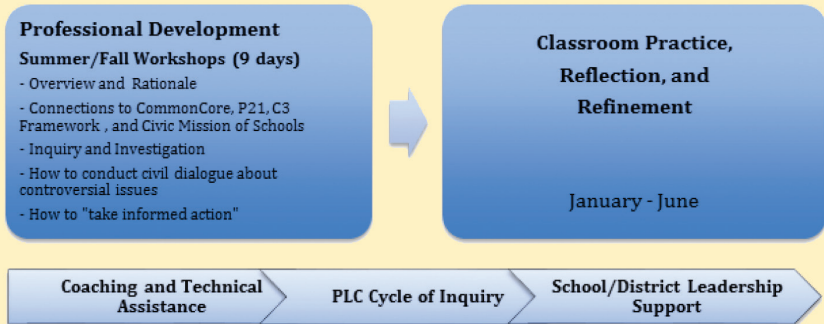
Hacienda La Puente Unified School District

Phases of Implementation

In order to achieve the goal for all twelve schools to fully institutionalize civic inquiry and investigation practices for all students, the participating schools proceeded through three phases of implementation as described below.

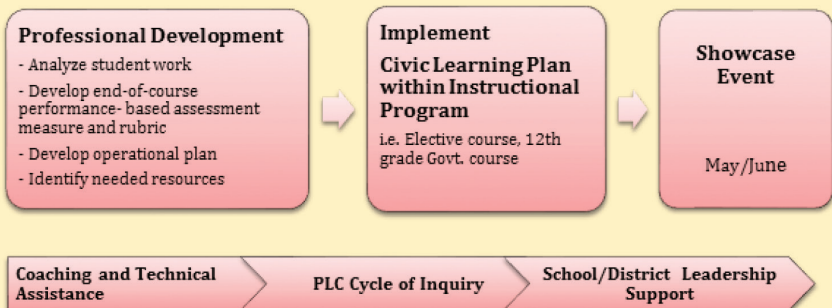
YEAR ONE: 2013 – 2014 FOUNDATION BUILDING

Each school identified a team consisting of teachers, a school site administrator, and family representative to engage in professional development activities led by expert scholars and practitioners to acquire the knowledge and skills to implement a high quality civic inquiry and investigation with students. They met monthly as professional learning communities (PLC) to plan, implement and practice the technique in classrooms. Classroom observations, coaching and technical support was provided on a continuous basis to each school by the California Democracy School Civic Learning Coach.



YEAR TWO: 2014 – 2015 INITIAL INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Year Two focused on developing plans to institutionalize inquiry and investigation practices into coursework within the high school educational program. Schools identified the structures and conditions needed for effective institutionalization and sustainability of inquiry and investigative approaches. Based on individual school needs, schools chose to incorporate high-quality civic learning in a variety of ways. Integration of civic learning into senior government courses, a modified ninth grade freshman seminar course, social studies courses, or English courses to name a few. Operating as a PLC, they continued 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.



At the conclusion of year two, teachers saw positive results in the civic skills, knowledge and disposition of their students. Teachers reported the following:

- “Seeing kids actually engage in issues that exist in our society today that even adults grapple with trying to resolve is really rewarding. And seeing them have articulate opinions based on the evidence they’ve uncovered.”
- “I think it’s the fact that the teacher doesn’t control this – teachers are quiet. They’re facilitating. And so I think it’s the fact that students are being heard.”

Students also shared a belief that they could be effective members of their community. Students reported the following:

- “I feel great about ‘taking action’ in my school because I want to make a difference/change. Everyone complains at school about many things, I want to change that. Last year I didn’t like helping as much.”
- “I felt like I could change anything before, to let things pass me by, but now I feel as if I need to.”
- “I believe taking action in my school or community is very important. There are certain issues that go unheard of and need to be addressed. I definitely feel different from a year ago because serving my community opened my eyes.”

The year concluded with formal presentations of their programs at the California Democracy School Showcase Event held on May 2, 2015 at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Birthplace in Yorba Linda, California. This event opened with keynote presentations by students and civic leaders. The bulk of the day consisted of student-led presentations of their many projects and opportunities to reflect, network, and share feedback with students from different schools. Use of social media was prevalent.

YEAR THREE 2015-2016: CAPACITY BUILDING AND FULL INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The goal for Year Three was for each school to formally institutionalize civic learning in their instructional program to ensure that every student engaged in a civic inquiry and investigation at least once during their high school career. Each school team continued to meet regularly to continue the cycle of inquiry needed to analyze and share student work, revise programming as needed, and work to build capacity for the program to sustain it beyond Year Three.

Each school conducted formal presentations of their programs for their community, school board and at the end-of-year California Civic Learning Showcase held at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. Like the Year Two Showcase, students listened to state civic learning leaders including California Secretary of State Alex Padilla and engaged in a question and answer session with panelists. Again, students made formal presentations of their projects, shared their displays, and enjoyed tours of the Reagan Presidential Library. The event concluded with an exciting presentation of plaques and banners awarded to the California Democracy Schools.

Outcomes and Accomplishments

The Year Three Evaluation conducted by Dr. Tiffany Berry, Sarah Mason and Kathleen Doll of the Claremont Evaluation Center of Claremont Graduate University revealed a number of important outcomes and findings of the program. The entire report including surveys used for the study can be found at <http://www.lacoe.edu/Portals/0/Curriculum-Instruction/Final%20Evaluation.pdf>¹¹

Implementation of Structural Supports

The report focused on three elements of implementation critical to the success of the program.

- **Professional Development:** Among those who attended, most teachers viewed the professional development sessions as being relevant ($m = 6.10$), useful ($m = 6.11$), and high quality ($m = 5.96$), with an overall average quality score of 6.08 (where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree). These scores are comparable to those from Year 2, indicating an ongoing and consistent degree of teacher satisfaction with professional development activities.
- **Civic Learning Coach:** Teachers tended to view their involvement with the Civic Learning Coach as extremely positive, with teachers describing the Civic Learning Coach as competent ($m = 6.73$), active, ($m = 6.35$) and effective ($m = 6.41$), with an overall average quality score (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) of 6.44.
- **Professional Learning Communities:** Two measures of PLC quality were collected on the teacher survey: (1) a measure of perceived quality, which included items on teachers' perceptions of the relevance, usefulness, and effectiveness of the PLC, and (2) a measure of PLC climate, which focused on teachers' perceptions on the collaborative nature of their PLC. It included items such as "I have formed positive relationships with other members of the PLC" and "Our PLC works together as a team." On both of these measures, the California Democracy School project received high scores, indicating strong support for the ongoing use and utility of the Professional Learning Communities. On a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 to 7, and where higher scores reflected higher levels of either perceived quality or more positive PLC climate, average quality scores sat at 5.98 (for perceived quality) and 6.65 (for PLC climate).

¹¹ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016.

SCHOOLWIDE INSTITUTIONALIZATION

All twelve schools succeeded in institutionalizing civic learning for all students at their sites. Because they represented a broad spectrum of school settings ranging from continuation and juvenile incarceration sites to large comprehensive schools in middle/high socioeconomic neighborhoods, it was important to allow schools to be flexible in their planning. As noted, they were allowed to integrate the civic learning inquiry and investigation model within any subject area and across any grade span that worked best for their school site. Though the minimum requirement was to integrate civic learning across a single grade span, most schools went beyond this expectation to integrate it across multiple grade spans and in other courses as well.

Below is a description of each school's implementation plan. Details and evidence of accomplishments can be found at <http://www.lacoe.edu/CurriculumInstruction/HistorySocialScience/CaliforniaDemocracySchool/DemonstrationSchools.aspx>

School

Bellflower Middle School/High School

Bellflower Unified School District

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented in

- All history classes in grades 7, 8, 10, and 11.
- All Government classes in grade 12 (year long course)
- All World Geography classes in grade 9 – required one semester course for all ninth graders
- 10th grade English department has also integrated civic learning components.

School

Juan Cabrillo High School

Long Beach Unified School District

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented in

- All 11th grade history classes across the school.
- Year One – engaged 20 classes in CalJ Small Learning Community
- Year Two – engaged 30 classes in CalJ and Engineering and Design Small Learning Communities
- Year Three – engaged 70 classes across the school representing a variety of subject areas. All students in these classes participate in at least one civic project

School

Cesar Chavez Continuation School

Compton USD

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented in

- Civic Action Project (CAP) from Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) is only being implemented in one U.S. History class due to high staff turnover. School policy is in place to embed civic inquiry and investigation in all government classes next year.
- Year One and Two: CAP was implemented in all 12th grade government and 11th grade U.S. History classes

School

Culver City High School

Culver City Unified School District

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented in

- All 12th grade government classes
- 9th grade Global Issues one semester required course introduces students to civic learning. Students examine current events and issues in US and world.
- 11th grade US history has integrated mock trials of historical events in all classes.
- Several classes across the curriculum:
 - Science teachers are using Socratic Seminar in classrooms.
 - English 9 Honors, Intercultural Literature and other English Classes are implementing civic inquiry and investigations
 - AP Chemistry
 - Native Spanish 2 and 3
 - Biology
- History classes introduce units of study through an inquiry driven approach.
- Civic Action Project (CAP) from Constitutional Rights Foundation is used in classrooms.
- Summer Reading required of all classes. Ninth grade classrooms engaged in Socratic Seminar when school resumed about a book they read.

School

Glendale High School

Glendale Unified School District

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented in

- All 9th grade Contemporary World Affairs (CWA) classes and
- Some 12th grade government and economics classes.

- Every 9th grade student will be enrolled in CWA beginning fall 2016, including English Language Development and Special Education students. For many students engaging in civic learning connected to content in this way is a first-time experience for them.
-

School

Loara High School

Anaheim Union High School District

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented in

- All 11th grade U.S. History classes and Senior Government/Economics classes.
 - Civic inquiry and investigation also occurring in one English class.
 - School working to add civic inquiry and investigation in 10th grade history courses.
 - All 502 seniors have engaged in at least 4 of the 6 proven practices and have completed a civic inquiry and investigation as part of their government/economics course. Government and Economics is a blended, one-year course.
 - Explicitly teaching all students in six proven practices in grades 9-12.
 - By end of 12th grade, ALL students engage in two civic inquiries in which they acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become civically informed, active and engaged.
 - Civic Fair conducted at Open House each year.
-

School

Pomona High School

Pomona Unified School District

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented in

- All 10th grade English classes.
- All Advanced Placement US History classes
- All AVID classes, grades 11 and 12 implement a modified version of civic inquiry and investigation process and engage in service-learning project.

ASB voting process updated to reflect democratic practices including speeches, election, voting by all students.

Political Awareness Club focuses on providing civics related information to students on issues that affect their daily lives. Activities have included:

- Voter registration for senior class
- Mayoral debate student organized and student led
- Information about presidential candidates

School

Road to Success Academy Camp Scott and Scudder

Los Angeles County Office of Education
(school for incarcerated girls)

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented

- For all students throughout the five themes of the curriculum: Beauty, Hope, Power and Empowerment, Transformation, New Beginnings. Each theme includes a civic learning element. Examples include:
 - Beauty Theme examples: Should beauty pageants be banned?
 - Hope Theme examples: Should incarcerated felons be allowed to vote? Should desalinization be used to tackle the drought? Should voting be compulsory?
 - New Beginnings Theme examples (focused on immigration): Should the military patrol the borders? Should immigrants in the US illegally who are convicted of a crime be deported? Should US born children whose parents are in the US illegally be deported?
 - Power and Empowerment Theme examples: Should the US military continue its drone strikes abroad? Should the citizens decide whether the US should go to war? Should the US fight on foreign soil? Should human genetic research (cloning) be utilized to eradicate diseases?
- Each core subject areas including Career Technical Education includes a civic learning component.

Examples of civic actions taken:

- Wrote legislation on changing California's law into allowing incarcerated felons to vote.
- Wrote letters to a representative reflecting students' point of view on current immigration issues. President Obama sent a reply to one of the letters.
- Created an environmental impact study on desalinization to the Poseidon Corp. in Huntington Beach, CA.

School

Santa Monica High School

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation is implemented in:

- Freshman Seminar one-semester class required of all students. 11 teachers teach the course. As a result, all students are engaging in civic learning practices and often repeating the exercise in their content courses throughout high school.

- Freshman Seminar teachers are implementing civic inquiry and investigation in the other classes they teach, hence providing multiple opportunities for students to engage in civic learning.
- The Freshman Seminar curriculum with civic learning has been approved at the district level.
- Civic inquiry and investigation also occurring in a variety of other curricular courses: government, economics, English
- Capacity building is evident through coaching, development, support, teaching and learning culture. “We are teaching science in order to prepare students to be responsible citizens.”
- The PLC model has established the infrastructure for teachers to engage in professional development and build capacity. Began with social studies evidence-based writing techniques. This led to other subject area teachers adopting the model.
- Civic Learning Award of Merit and other accomplishments of students will be showcased at Santa Monica-Malibu USD Board of Education.
- Student Ten Year Plan – students explore strengths and passions for themselves to envision where they will be and what they will be doing 10 years from now.

School

Savanna High School

Anaheim Union High School District

Implementation Plan

Civic Inquiry and Investigation

- 11th and 12th U.S. History and Govt./Econ classes now implement civic inquiry and investigation
 - Progressive Era/Wal-Mart
 - PSA's, websites, podcasts, letters to Wal-Mart
- All 10th grade World History classes will implement civic inquiry and investigations by 2017
- School is looking at introducing civic inquiry and investigation in all ninth grade health classes
- 40 hour community service requirement to be adopted by board of education

School

Village Academy High School

Pomona Unified School District

Implementation Plan

Evidence of Institutionalization

- One 11th grade history teacher at Village Academy High School is implementing civic inquiry and investigation; hence all students participate in this activity.
- The English department is supporting civic inquiry and investigation process by assisting with research component.

- All English teachers are trained and using different components of the civic inquiry and investigation in their courses. Examples include:
 - One 11th grade English teacher implements civic learning with her students in periods one and six.
 - English teacher, conducts civil dialogue with all his English and AVID classes.
- District-wide “bridge” elective “Civic Engagement and Literacy” one-semester course includes civic learning components based on the five steps of the California Democracy School civic learning model. Course will be required of all incoming ninth grade students at Village High School beginning summer 2016 as approved by Board of Education. Course and curriculum have been approved by the district’s Curriculum Committee and Pomona Board of Education. Village Academy will likely invite an English teacher to teach the course. Course is available as an option at other schools.
- Intervention class at Village Academy High School also includes elements of the civic inquiry and investigation process.

School

William Workman High School

Hacienda La Puente Unified School District

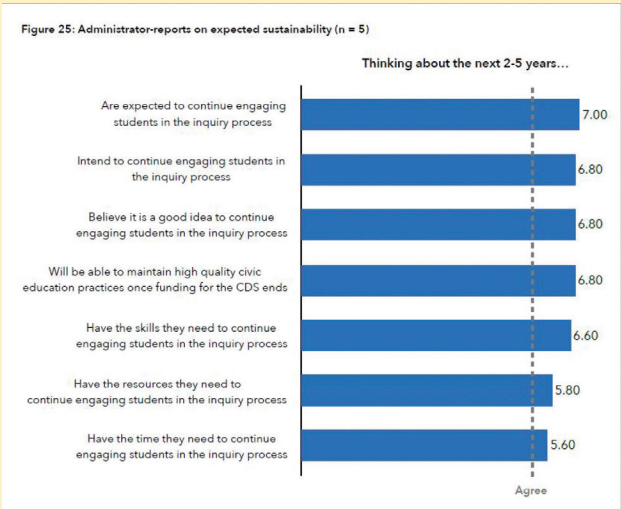
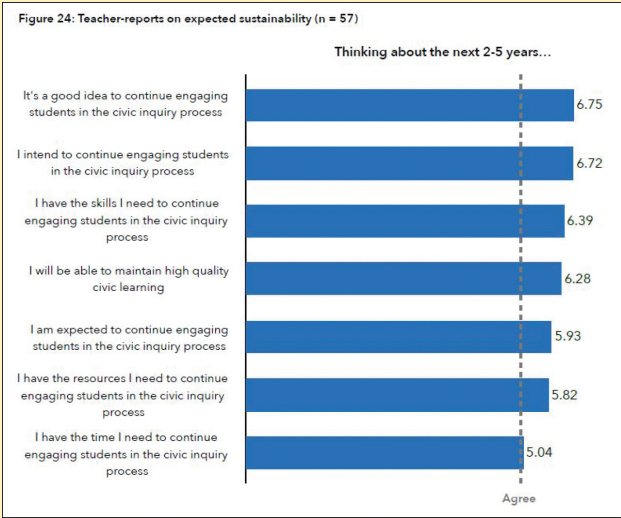
Implementation Plan

Evidence of Institutionalization and Sustainability:

- Civic inquiry and investigation is implemented in
 - All 10th grade world history classes, including 10th grade history honors course
 - All 11th grade history classes
 - All 12th grade government and economics classes
- Work is also being done to integrate civic learning in science, physical education, English, and geography courses.
- Elements of inquiry, investigation, civil dialogue, and communicating conclusions are scattered across other courses beginning in ninth grade.
- Mock trial is being conducted in geography elective courses, some Spanish classes.
- Student portfolios of work include evidence of expository, argumentative, and informative writing. Civic learning is utilized to document use of argumentative and informative writing. Portfolios follow students throughout high school; used to evaluate student performance and English proficiency.
- Workman has created templates and tools that are being shared and used by other high schools in the district.

SCHOOLWIDE SUSTAINABILITY

Schools were also charged with establishing plans to sustain their programs once the initiative concluded and grant funded support was no longer available. According to the Year Three Evaluation, both teachers and administrators reported high expectations for the project's potential sustainability over the next 2-5 years. Average teacher scores for expected sustainability sat at 6.14, and average administrator scores sat at 6.49 on a 7-point scale where higher scores reflected higher levels of expected sustainability.¹²



¹² Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016.

A number of approaches have been employed by schools to sustain the civic learning initiative including the adoption of school and school board policies and referencing civic learning in school mission statements, vision statements, and Single Plan for Student Achievement. Schools have adopted civic learning curriculum, included civic learning in school accreditation plans for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), and dedicated funds in California Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP) to guarantee funding to support ongoing professional development and technical assistance. Evidence to sustain the initiative can be seen below in the plans put in place by each of the twelve schools.

School

Bellflower Middle School/High School

Bellflower Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- Bellflower Middle School/High School 2016-17 budget proposal for LCAP spending includes funding for a full time Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) for civic learning and funding for civic learning professional development.
- A Bellflower School Board Resolution was adopted to support civic learning
- Bellflower USD Mission Statement includes
 - *Become responsible, informed, productive, independent and contributing citizens.*
- Civics referenced in WASC Accreditation, and Single Plan for Student Achievement
- Bellflower Middle School/High School recently received the California Civic Learning Award of Excellence from California Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson.

School

Juan Cabrillo High School

Long Beach Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- American History Civics Inquiry Project adopted at Cabrillo High School
 - Long Beach Unified School District Junior Research Paper was authorized by Long Beach Board of Education in 2004.
 - LBUSD History-Social Science Coordinator and U.S. history teachers from Cabrillo modified the Junior Research Paper curriculum to reflect information from the civic learning professional development provided by the California Democracy School Initiative and Mikva Challenge. The goal is to make inquiry relevant to students' community needs and issues.
 - LBUSD Assistant Superintendent has approved the project
 - The project is currently being piloted by teachers at Cabrillo High School. Feedback from teachers will be used to update and finalize the project.
 - Course outlines for U.S. History, grades 6-12 are being revised with teacher input. The final draft of the American History Civics Inquiry Project will

be included and sent to the Board of Education for final approval to be implemented in the 2016-17 school year across all high schools.

- U.S. History is a required (A) course for University of California admission that requires a “key assignment.” This project will serve as that requirement.
 - Fundamental civic learning practices are implemented beginning in ninth grade.
 - All ninth and tenth grade teachers in all core areas are engaged in “Equity and Access” training – includes focus on investigative text to motivate students to learn, civil dialogue.
 - “Collaborative Conversations” has been adopted by LBUSD to be used across the district. The protocol aligns with the goals and objectives for the civil dialogue construct for the California Democracy School initiative.
-

School

Cesar Chavez Continuation School

Compton Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- The following commitments have been made by the site principal:
 - Civic Inquiry and Investigation will be embedded in all government classes using the Civic Action Project (CAP) from Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) beginning in the 2016-17 school year. This requirement will not require school board approval but will be written into the Single Plan for Student Achievement, WASC accreditation and teacher handbook.
 - Constitutional Rights Foundation will continue to train existing and new teachers in the school in the use of CAP.
 - All students will be required to participate in CAP in order to graduate.
 - The school policy is evidenced in the Single Plan for Student Achievement for 2015-16:
 - *Actions to Be Taken to Reach This Goal: Professional development for teachers and staff on project based learning. All history teachers will be trained on how to implement the Civic Action Project into the history curriculum.*
 - “Civic-minded Citizens” is identified as a Student Learner Outcome in the Cesar Chavez Continuation High School 2014-2015 School Accountability Report Card.
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School

Culver City High School

Culver City Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- Culver City Unified School District School Board Resolution supporting Civic Learning was adopted by School Board
- Civic learning to be included in January 2017 School Accountability Report Card (SARC).
- Single Plan for Student Achievement references support for civic learning

- LCAP for district will include language to support civic learning for 2016-17.
- School Mission Statement has embedded civic learning.
- School board, school staff and administration committed to sustaining program beyond the grant initiative.
- Expected Schoolwide Learning Result (ESLR): Involved Citizens – to take the initiative to contribute their time, energies, and talents, to better the welfare of themselves and others while demonstrating understanding and respect for the people of a diverse world
- Character Counts program adopted – Citizenship is one of the six pillars.
- Vibrant history of civic engagement prior to the California Democracy School Initiative – civic and service engagement, service learning, student activism, community support and partnerships.
- School culture has embedded and adopted the Six Proven Practices of the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools
- Extracurricular Activities promote leadership to address civic issues – next year all clubs will be required to adopt a civic action project. Athletics also engage in civic action projects.
- Partnerships nurtured and strengthened with
 - Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)
 - Culver City Council member
 - *SeePolitical* voter education
 - LA Youth Ambassador Cohort
 - Culver-Palms YMCA Youth and Government
 - March of the Living
 - 15-25 non-profit organizations in Culver City
 - World Affairs Council
- Professional development is ongoing – Socratic Seminar training conducted to entire staff.
- Administration is funding and supporting professional development for teachers.
- 12th grade project has become more meaningful and engaging – past projects asked students to attend board meetings and write a summary. NEW project requires students to engage in a CAP project and take informed action to address issues they are interested in. Examples of policy changes led by students include:
 - Students changed the policy on use of cell phones during class
 - Crosswalk established in front of school

School

Glendale High School

Glendale Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- Professional development is supported to equip teachers with curriculum and instructional strategies. Title 1 and general funds will support this. Professional development is written into action plan and school plan. Funding also to be provided for ongoing PLC meetings

- Single Plan for Student Achievement for 2016-17 includes reference to civics
 - Glendale High School Schoolwide Action Plan – is a supplement, based on district, WASC, school site goals and stems from LCAP priorities. Goal 2 of the plan describes how Glendale High School will address the LCAP priorities. This has been submitted to WASC and to the district and approved by District. This is a six-year plan.
 - Glendale High School will continue to incorporate civic learning in 10th, 11th and 12th grade social science classes. Examples include:
 - WWI and Ottoman Empire study is connected to Darfur and other current genocide events
 - Industrial Revolution and Child Labor in the past is connected to current issues around child labor today in Africa and Asia.
 - An English teacher has incorporated civic learning by asking students to focus on questions about driving in connection to course content. Students completed a Public Service Announcement about safe driving. Work is being done to engage English teachers to align with Contemporary World Affairs course.
 - Partnership with “Facing History and Ourselves” is extremely helpful.
 - Senior Project will begin with incoming 9th graders in fall 2016 – first project will be completed in 2020. Students will be required to engage in all five steps of civic learning and engage in a civic action.
 - School will continue to expand core team to include all social science teachers from all disciplines
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School

Loara High School

Anaheim Union High School District

Sustainability Plan

- Resolution to support civic learning adopted by Anaheim Union High School District Board of Education.
- Student Accountability Report Card for Loara High School includes language to support civic learning.
- Single Plan for Student Achievement includes language to support civic learning; \$20,000 budget proposal included to support civic learning at Loara High School.
- Local Control and Accountability Plan for entire school district will dedicate funding for civic learning.
- Creation of Capstone includes civic learning component.
- Professional development to be continued in use of Six Proven Practices, five step civic inquiry process and project-based learning.
- Civic learning built into assessment with Capstone reflections twice a year.
- Curriculum/Instruction/Learning Environment: Professional Learning Community (PLC) process, staff and parent learning walks and trainings to be continued.
- Technology resources dedicated to purchase projectors, Chromebook laptop carts and other to support civic learning research in classrooms.

School

Pomona High School

Pomona Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- Single Plan for Student Achievement includes language to support civic learning as *“Civic Learning for All” goal: All PHS students, beginning in their 10th grade year, will participate in a civic inquiry and investigation to acquire knowledge, skills and disposition outcomes identified in the California Democracy School accreditation guidelines.* Budget proposal includes funding to support professional development, resources for student projects, release time, substitute coverage, etc. to support ongoing civic learning.
- School is utilizing Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) as a linchpin for building civic learning across the curriculum. Pomona High School has been identified as an AVID Demonstration School.
- Pomona USD Mission Statement includes reference to civic learning: *...students will gain academic excellence and take personal and community pride as responsible citizens and productive participants in a diverse society and global economy.*
- Curriculum Guide for Grade 10 English classes now includes the five-step process for civic inquiry and investigation at Pomona High School.
- Civic Learning referenced in WASC Accreditation.
- The school leadership team, School Site Council and Civic Teaching PLC group will routinely engage in the cycle of inquiry to continually monitor, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the Civic Engagement for ALL plan.

School

Road to Success Academy

Camp Scott and Scudder

Los Angeles County Office of Education

(school for incarcerated girls)

Sustainability Plan

- Mission Statement for Road to Success Academy at Scott Scudder includes reference to civic learning: *“...The Road to Success Academy also incorporates daily supportive activities to promote character development, civic mindedness and self-esteem that will empower them to make positive behavioral changes in their community.”*
- Single Plan for Student Achievement for 2015-16 includes a focus on civic learning. 2016-17 Single Plan will also include a focus on civic learning.
- LACOE Board of Education passed a resolution to support civic learning.
- Scott Scudder has approved curriculum themes to include civic learning foci. Interest exists to include civic learning modifications to curriculum at other sites.

- New teachers to the Scott Scudder site meet with experienced teachers to learn strategies and techniques to implement civic learning in their courses.
 - Para-educators provide support for teachers in implementing civic learning.
-

School

Santa Monica High School

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- Single Plan for Student Achievement for 2015-16 with sustainability in mind, provided time and resources for Freshman Seminar teachers to integrate and adopt aspects of “Facing History and Ourselves”, Ethnic Studies and the California Democracy Initiative. \$10,000 was dedicated to achieving this goal. The Single Plan also included: *Provide Civic Initiative cross-curricular leadership group with collaborative LACOE meeting and planning time to support rollout of authentically meaningful, CCSS aligned, units and lessons.*
 - SMMUSD Board of Education is very interested in supporting Ethnic Studies and Freshman Seminar. Health is moved out of Freshman Seminar into physical education course to make room for civic learning in Freshman Seminar.
 - Santa Monica High School Student Objectives include:
 - *Ethical students who deal honorably with other human beings and the environment; work democratically and collaboratively to improve school, community and society.*
-

School

Savanna High School

Anaheim Union High School District

Sustainability Plan

- Capstone Portfolio includes elements of civic learning to be demonstrated by students.
 - LCAP, Single Plan for Student Achievement, and School Accountability Report Card all include language to support civic learning
 - Board Policy supports implementation of civic learning.
 - District Mission and Vision Statement include language to support civic learning.
-

School

Village Academy High School

Pomona Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- The Single Plan for Student Achievement includes language to support civic learning. School culture is also identified in the plan.
- The Civic Action Club was established this year for students who want to work with students at other schools to address problems in the school community.

- District “Seal of Service” awarded to graduating seniors who have demonstrated high quality service-learning.

School

William Workman High School

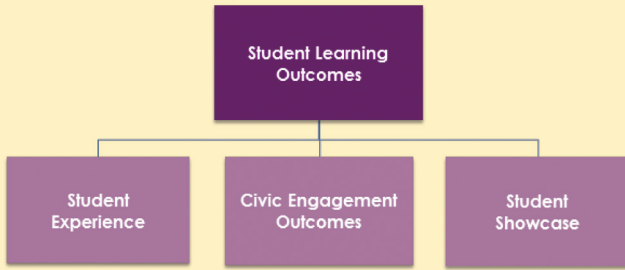
Hacienda La Puente Unified School District

Sustainability Plan

- Bridging the initiative with Project Lead at K-5 levels, the Workman team hopes to move a board policy forward to approve both.
- Teacher Union President (past and current) supports the initiative.
- The Hacienda LaPuente School Board supports work that connects schools to the community.
- Money budgeted into this year’s LCAP was used to support initiative this year for substitute coverage, etc. Plan is to continue using LCAP funds next year once the grant initiative sunsets.
- Workman Vision: *Workman High School will develop leaders who positively impact their community.*
- One of the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLR) highlights civic learning: *Become Responsible Citizens – will be respectful, tolerant and responsible citizens who take an active role in society.*
- Civic learning is included in the WASC Report.
- Civic Learning is written into the Single Plan for Student Achievement

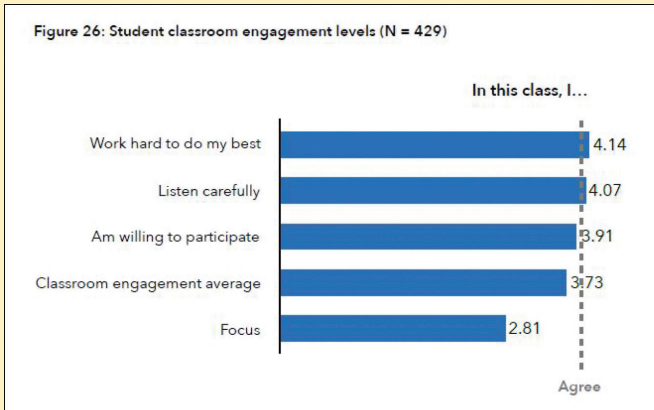
Student Learning Outcomes

An important component of the evaluation centered on understanding the student experience with the California Democracy Schools Initiative. Through the student survey, as well as via teacher focus groups, the evaluation examined student learning outcomes in three ways: (1) by examining students' experiences; (2) by examining specific civic engagement outcomes; and (3) examining the impact of the Civic Learning Showcase held at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.¹³



- **Student Experience**

- **Student Engagement** Students reported moderately high levels of classroom engagement on four engagement-related survey questions. When student responses on these four engagement-related questions were aggregated, the average score for classroom engagement was 3.73 on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) scale. Students reported working hard to do their best in class ($M = 4.14$), listening carefully ($M = 4.07$), and a willingness to participate ($M = 3.91$). Student engagement was also positively facilitated by teacher practice. Students in classrooms where teachers used the foundational classroom strategies more frequently (i.e. debate and discussion) reported higher levels of engagement in their classroom activities.¹⁴

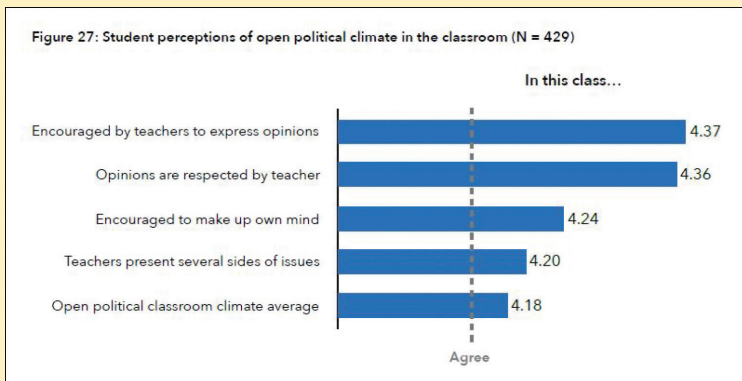


¹³ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016.

¹⁴ *ibid*

- **Open Political Climate** Open classroom climates are described as those where students can openly engage in discussion of political issues, and previous studies have shown that open classroom climates are strong predictors of student civic engagement.¹⁵ Consequently, the evaluation team included measures of classroom climate in the student survey so we could examine the extent to which students in CDS classrooms experienced an open political environment.

Findings suggest that participating students rate their classroom climates as highly open, indicating a general environment where openness, respect, and a welcoming of diverse views is encouraged. Across the six schools where students completed surveys, the overall mean score for open political climate was 4.18 on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) scale. Students reported that they felt encouraged to make up their own minds about issues ($M = 4.24$), that their opinions were respected by their teachers ($M = 4.36$), they felt encouraged by their teachers to express their opinions ($M = 4.37$), and that teachers presented several sides of an issue ($M = 4.20$).¹⁶



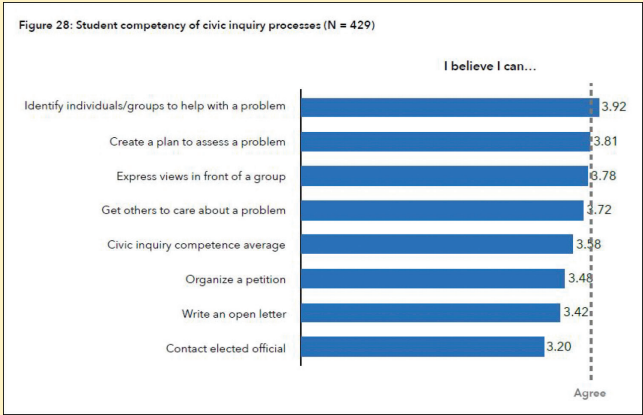
- **Civic Engagement Outcomes**

- **Competence of the Civic Inquiry Process** As a result of participating in the program, students reported an average competence level of 3.58 on a scale of 1 (Definitely can't) to 5 (Definitely can). Students were asked about their abilities to create a plan to assess the problem ($M = 3.81$), get other people to care about the problem ($M = 3.72$), express their views in front of a group of people ($M = 3.78$), and identify individuals or groups who could help with the problem ($M = 3.92$). However, students reported lower competence levels in their abilities to write an opinion letter to a local newspaper ($M = 3.42$), contact a local elected official ($M = 3.20$), or organize a petition ($M = 3.48$).¹⁷

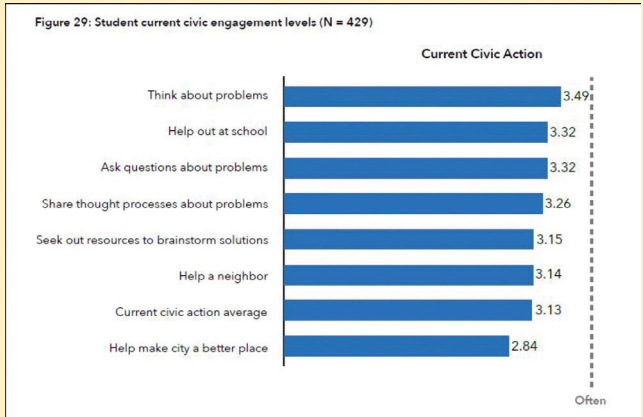
¹⁵ Campbell, D. E. (2008). Voice in the classroom: How an open classroom climate fosters political engagement among adolescents. *Political Behavior*, 30(4), 437-454.

¹⁶ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

¹⁷ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016



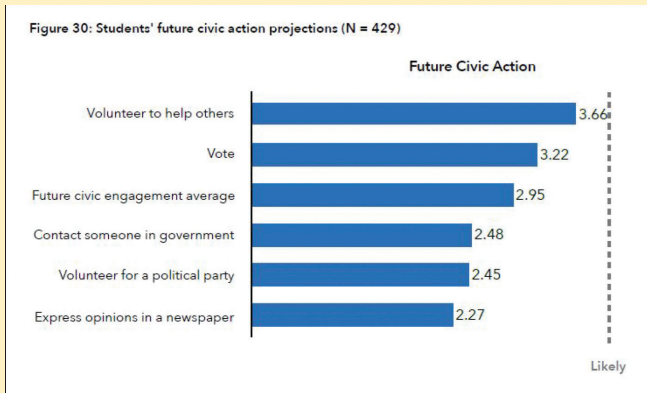
- **Political Efficacy** Students who reported higher competency levels also reported higher levels of political efficacy. Overall, on a scale of 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree), students believed they had the capacities to think about problems that face them in this country ($M = 4.01$), seek resources to get more information about problems ($M = 3.96$), use the information they learn from sources to brainstorm solutions ($M = 3.97$), and to share their thought processes about problems with others ($M = 3.84$). Additionally, students indicated a belief that if they work with others in the community, they can help make things better ($M = 3.99$). However, students indicated slightly lower average scores regarding their belief that they can make a difference in their community ($M = 3.71$).¹⁸
- **Current Civic Engagement Levels of Students** After participating in a civic inquiry and investigation, students reported moderate levels of current civic engagement across nine community-engagement activities.¹⁹



¹⁸ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

¹⁹ *ibid*

- **Future Civic Action of Students** When asked about the likelihood to take civic action after high school graduation, the average student score was 2.95 on a 1 (Not Likely At All) to 5 (Very Likely) scale. Overall, students reported lower likelihoods of contacting someone in government who represents their community ($M = 2.48$), expressing opinions in a newspaper, on the radio, or on TV ($M = 2.27$), or volunteering for a political party ($M = 2.45$). However, students reported being more likely to do volunteer work to help others ($M = 3.66$) and slightly more likely to vote ($M = 3.22$) in the future.²⁰

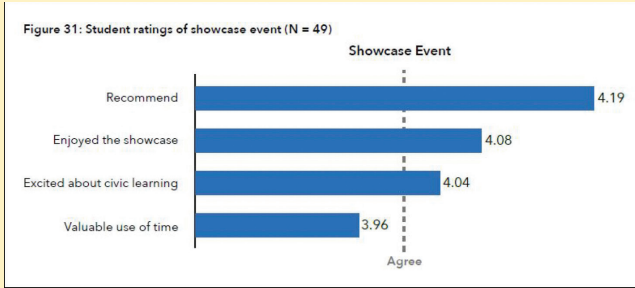


- **Civic Learning Showcase** The culminating event of Year Two and Year Three was the California Democracy School Civic Learning Showcase. Students from all twelve schools prepared and presented their work to their peers, families, teachers, school officials, school board members, policymakers and community members. The Year Three Showcase was held at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in conjunction with a Civic Action Showcase held at the Sacramento County Office of Education. An opening panel of speakers at both locales was live streamed to both audiences. Panelists included (Sacramento panelists) and (Los Angeles panelists). A special welcome was delivered by California Secretary of State Alex Padilla. At the conclusion, each of the twelve schools was awarded the distinction of becoming a California Democracy School and honored with a plaque and banner to be displayed at their school. More information about the two showcases can be found at <http://www.lacoe.edu/CaliforniaDemocracySchool.aspx>

Students indicated on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) scale that they enjoyed the showcase ($M = 4.08$), found the event a valuable use of their time ($M = 3.96$), would recommend the showcase to future students ($M = 4.19$), were made excited about civic learning at the showcase ($M = 3.82$), and learned more about what it means to be an active citizen ($M = 4.04$).²¹

²⁰ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

²¹ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016



When students were asked how the event enhanced or built upon what they learned in class, several themes emerged during the evaluation:²²

- ***An enhanced awareness of global and local concerns***
 - “This class has opened my eyes to all the issues that are going on in the US and around the world. The showcase showed me more issues to be aware about.”
 - “I learned more about my community, examples to how I can use what I learned in this class in the real world.”
- ***An increased motivation to get involved in world issues and a sense of efficacy.***
 - “It made me think of participating more to get involved about what’s going on so I can make a difference for those who can’t.”
 - “It made me realize that anyone can do something to help their community and help some global or local problems.”
- ***A deeper understanding of the importance of civic participation***
 - “The showcase really enhanced the way we learned things in this class. We did a lot of class discussion that required everyone to participate. If a person didn’t participate, that would affect the whole class. This connects to the fact that all votes matter, and becoming an active member really make a difference in our society.”
 - “The showcase enhanced my creativity to learn more about civic actions. It made me realize the importance of young people voting and the importance to speak my opinions on important issues to try to make a change in the community.”
 - “It allowed me to see that civic action is important. I got to see many of the subjects I’ve learned in class being put into action.”

²² Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

- **Inspiration**

- “Showed how we change learning about problems into thinking of solutions.”
- “I think it was inspiring to see how hard some kids worked on their projects. Enhanced my feeling that I could make a difference.



3

Chapter

Conditions for Institutionalizing Civic Learning

- a. Facilitators of Effective Institutionalization
 - Strong administrator support
 - Sustained and High Quality Professional Development
 - An Active and Engaged Civic Learning Coach
 - Adoption of Professional Learning Communities
 - Release Time
 - A Scaffolded Approach to Institutionalization
- b. Barriers to Institutionalization



Chapter 3 – Conditions for Institutionalizing Civic Learning

Schoolwide institutional change is not easy. It takes long-term commitment, perseverance, and support from teachers, school administrators, and the school community. Qualitative and quantitative data confirm that antecedents to institutionalization contribute greatly to success. Attitudes, norms, and self-efficacy/capacity) consistently predict behavior change.

The evaluation of the California Democracy School Initiative studied attitudes towards civic learning, school norms around civic learning, and teacher perceptions of their own capacity to utilize civic learning behaviors. The research suggests that teachers are more likely to adopt new civic learning practices if they hold positive attitudes towards teaching civic learning, work in an environment where civic inquiry practices are both encouraged and expected, and believe they have the skills, resources and time to do so. The report found that teachers across the twelve schools held these beliefs and attitudes in Year Two and became more confident in their capacity to implement the civic inquiry practices in Year Three.²³

Changing teacher practices is also key to successful institutionalization. The evaluation found civic learning strategies instituted in Year Two were sustained during Year Three, with minor (but not significant) increases in the frequency of most strategies/steps. In a small number of cases, teacher efforts to engage students in dialogue involved very little dialogue at all, suggesting a need for consistent observation and feedback throughout the life of the project if it is to be replicated. Teachers reported initial anxiety about implementing new classroom practices, particularly those that involve “giving up control” over the classroom and its activities. Hence it is important to recognize, support, and monitor teacher practices on an ongoing basis to sustain implementation of high quality civic learning.²⁴

Because the California Democracy Initiative is a unique approach for institutionalizing high quality civic learning for all students, it is important to identify the key factors that led to its success. The evaluation team examined the facilitators and barriers to effective institutionalization in a number of ways.²⁵ In order to effectively replicate the model across the nation, these factors merit close attention.

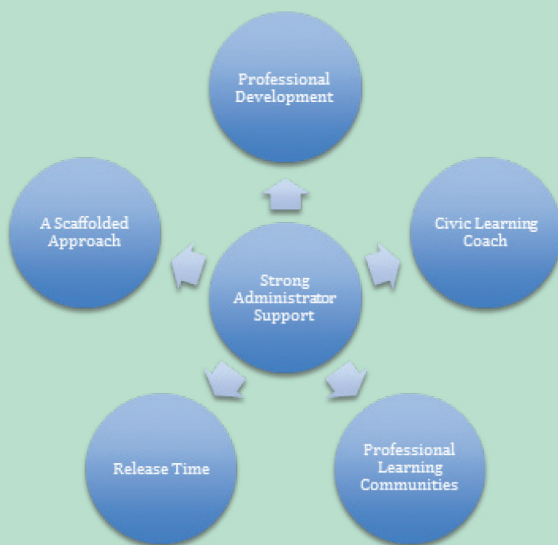
Facilitators of Effective Institutionalization

A central focus of the evaluation was to identify the structures that need to be in place for schools to effectively institutionalize high quality civic learning for all students. Below are the key findings based on quantitative and qualitative data collected from teachers, school administrators, and program staff. This information is invaluable for purposes of replication.

²³ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

²⁴ *Ibid*

²⁵ *Ibid*



Strong Administrator Support

First and foremost, strong administrator support is key to institutionalization. When teachers felt they had strong support from their administrator, they were able to work more effectively within their professional learning community to put systems in place to support civic inquiry at their schools. This finding is supported by a number of key findings in the final evaluation of the program:

- Teachers, on average, rated administrator support as the most important facilitator of effective institutionalization, receiving an average score of 6.72 on a 7-point scale where higher scores reflected greater importance.
- When asked to identify the one most critical factor for effective institutionalization, 12% of teachers selected administrator support.²⁶

Focus group discussions and interviews revealed further acknowledgement that administrative support is vital to the work. For example:

- “Administrator buy in. I don’t understand how it works without it. It would be an uphill battle.”
- “...there isn’t anything we’ve asked for that we haven’t gotten. All the social science teachers went to the training. He (principal) made sure all the teachers went, gave us all subs, gave us the gym for the civics fair, 1,500 boards for the civics fair, gave us a special classroom. He doesn’t even question us. He wants our school to have this distinction....”²⁷

²⁶ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

²⁷ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

Ample qualitative data also confirms the important role of school administrators. Schools with robust programming with policies and procedures to sustain the program beyond the scope of the grant were led by administrators that were fully invested in providing high quality civic learning at their school sites for all students. They have found creative ways to leverage existing financial, school, and human resources to support teachers in their efforts to effectively integrate civic learning into their curriculum. They speak proudly of their programs at school board meetings and other local and state convenings of school administrators and policymakers. They continue to encourage colleagues at neighboring schools to join the effort and adopt civic learning practices. And they have become champions of civic learning within the educational community by demonstrating that preparing students for civic life is a fundamental mission and purpose of schools everywhere.

Sustained and High Quality Professional Development

For many teachers, the civic inquiry and investigation model calls for new instructional approaches that may require professional development and ongoing technical support. Acting as a teacher facilitator requires unique skills to guide students on a path of inquiry that engages them in deep analysis of information, civil dialogue about controversial issues, and decision-making processes to take informed action in the public sphere. Providing high quality professional development was a critical feature of this initiative.

According to the evaluation, “Teachers who attended ongoing professional development sessions and felt confident in their capacity to use civic inquiry processes were more likely to use them in practice. In this way, providing consistent professional development support that builds and maintains this capacity is key. Key findings that support this conclusion are as follows:

- Teachers, on average, rated professional development at 6.47 on a 7-point scale where higher scores reflected greater importance. When asked to identify the one most critical factor for effective institutionalization, 12% of teachers selected the professional development sessions, the third most commonly selected factor.
- On average, teachers who reported attending California Democracy School professional development events also tended to use foundational classroom strategies (e.g. discussion about controversial issues, discussion about local and international events) more frequently.
- There was also a positive relationship between the three antecedent conditions (teacher attitudes, norms, and perceptions of their capacity to use classroom conditions) and their use in practice, whereby teachers who felt more confident in their capacity were more likely to use these strategies in practice.²⁸

²⁸ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

These results were, again, supported by findings from the teacher interviews and focus groups:

- ‘I really appreciate the training. If you stop that, the program will peter out. It needs to be done continually. I know it’s a lot of time and a lot of expense.’
- ‘As someone who has been on it for the past 3 years...the workshops for the instructional piece is really helpful to have us grow what we do in the classroom and continue it.’²⁹

An Active and Engaged Civic Learning Coach

Providing ongoing training, mentoring, and technical assistance is also an influential factor in the implementation process. The Civic Learning Coach of the Initiative visited schools on a regular basis. He observed classroom practices, providing mentoring/coaching support, provided training on an “as needed” basis, and helped facilitate professional learning community meetings on a monthly basis at school sites.

According to the evaluation, teachers reported higher use of the foundational classroom strategies and civic inquiry steps when working with the Coach. Feedback from teachers emphasized the need for the Civic Learning Coach to play a greater role in future roll outs:

- “He [the Civic Learning Coach] guided us through those first 2 years. Last year he handed it off a little more. But just the fact that he comes...he does hold us accountable. He asks good questions. He has helped people with their lessons, sat in on lessons, and just made observations.”
- “I don’t feel like we utilize him [the Civic Learning Coach] effectively. He did come in one time when I did a lesson. It goes two ways... maybe he is pulled too thin with the 12 schools and not able to check in with us other than dissemination and “this is a due date.” But then we aren’t utilizing him and saying, “we need help with this.” It goes both ways. So maybe if there were more of him?”
- “[The Civic Learning Coach’s] position...He is the specialist, so we needed his extra help...we needed him to be here. Funding for more Civic Learning Coaches. His visits hold us accountable here to be prepared.”³⁰

Adoption of Professional Learning Communities

One of the requirements of the Initiative was a commitment from each school to form a Professional Learning Community (PLC) at each school site and conduct meetings at least once a month. Like most PLCs, the purpose was to bring together practitioners to share ideas and outcomes from classroom practice, identify and address challenges at the classroom, school, and district level, and establish an action plan for institutionalizing civic learning at the school site level.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

The program evaluation revealed the role of the Professional Learning Community as a critical feature of the California Democracy School project. Teacher responses to survey and focus group questions suggest that it was through the Professional Learning Communities that teachers and schools were able to plan together and work together to put their civic inquiry work into action, so ensuring that these are implemented as part of any future roll out will be key.

Teachers rated the Professional Learning Communities as one of the top five factors, as 6.47 on a 7-point scale. Additionally, teachers emphasized the importance of the team environment in ensuring both implementation and institutionalization took place:

- “Success comes more from the team that was built. The teachers that make it. Willing to buy in and try new things.”
- “The nature of our team here, and our campus. Mutual respect for each other. If we want to have a meeting, after school, we are all interested in keeping this going and getting what the students need.”³¹

Release Time

Similarly, the evaluation identified release time as an essential element for effective implementation. Allowing teachers to have shared release time so they can work together and plan collaboratively to put a school-wide system in place also facilitated institutionalization.

Teachers, on average, rated release time at 6.49 on a 7-point scale where higher scores reflected greater importance. When asked to identify the one most critical factor for effective institutionalization, 23% of teachers selected release time, the highest ranked factor. Again, this finding was echoed in the teacher interviews.

For example:

- “Pull out time is really important. We have tried to offer workshops on our own time, or after school, and it is really hard to get faculty to come to those things, they are so busy. Without that time, it is difficult.”
- “Time is of essence...the first couple years we got grant money, all the money we got was used for sub time and off site time. We went over to LACOE and hashed out the civics fair and everything in 2 days because we weren’t distracted.”³²

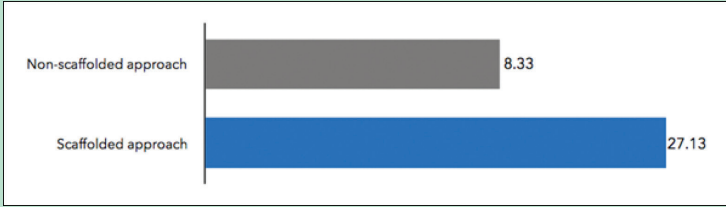
³¹ Ibid

³² Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

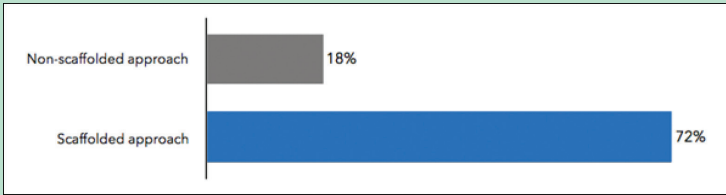
A Scaffolded Approach to Institutionalization

Schools' approaches to institutionalization proved to be another important facilitator of institutionalization. Specifically, when schools adopted a scaffolded approach to civic inquiry – that is, one where they explicitly and purposely embedded opportunities for students to experience civic education at each grade level, greater integration of civic learning inquiry steps and time spent on classroom discussion occurred as shown below.³³

Average teacher use of civic inquiry steps, broken down by use of scaffolded approach.



Average proportion of time spent on classroom discussion.



Findings from interviews and focus groups suggested that scaffolding promoted institutionalization because teachers were able to build on what had been learned in previous year levels, extending student learning and development. A number of teachers attributing their ability to use certain civic inquiry processes to the fact that teachers in earlier grades had already worked with students to build more foundational skills.

For example:

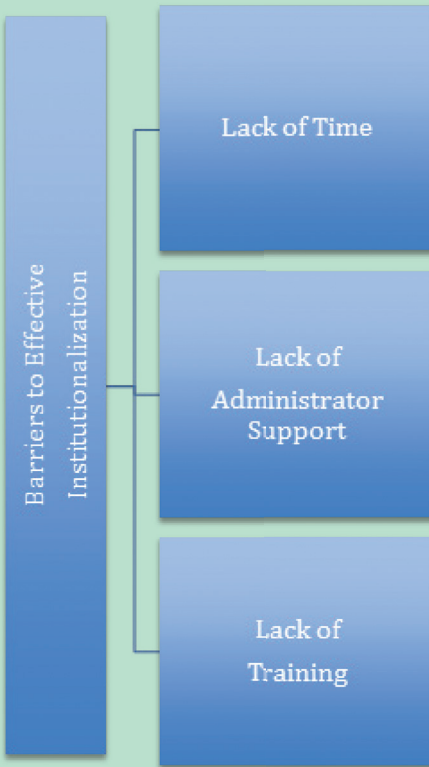
- “It starts with the middle school, baby steps. By the time they are in 9th grade they are going through all 5 steps. By the time they are juniors they are ready. As seniors they are already thinking of what they are going to do before we even ask the question. It is becoming institutionalized.”
- “The uniformity of it. The fact that we use the same terminology. Flow of the (action project) board is the same from year to year. The only thing that changes in the inquiry.

³³ ibid

I now have to spend less time focusing on how things should look and can now focus on the actual meat of the subject. As we go, year after year, we will be able to dive so much deeper.”³⁴

Barriers to Effective Institutionalization

The evaluation team was also asked to examine barriers to effective institutionalization. Their findings, not surprisingly, identified barriers familiar to many initiatives. Though often framed simply as the absence of the facilitators identified above, the commonly identified barriers to effective institutionalization were:



Lack of time was rated the most critical barrier to effective institutionalization, scoring, on average, 6.16 on a 7-point scale where higher scores reflected greater importance as a barrier. When asked to identify the one most problematic barrier to effective implementation, almost one third of teachers indicated a lack of time.

Similarly, **lack of administrative support** was the second-most commonly chosen barrier to effective implementation, with more than one in five identifying lack of administrative support as the most critical barrier.

Finally, **lack of training** was identified as the third-most commonly chosen barrier to effective implementation, with just under one in five of teachers selecting lack of training as the most important barrier to CDS implementation. When rated, lack of training scored 5.52 on the 7-point scale, the second-highest rated barrier.

³⁴ Berry, T., Mason, S., and Doll, K., *Evaluation of the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative*, Claremont Evaluation Center, Claremont Graduate University, June 2016

4

Chapter

Conditions for Building Capacity and Sustainability

- a. Leverage Available resources
- b. Adopt Policies – curriculum adoption/integration, mission statements, school board policies, assessment and accountability
- c. Celebrate Success
 - Award programs
 - Showcase events to policymakers, school board, school community, parents and families, business community, potential funders
 - Engage the media



Chapter 4 – Conditions for Building Capacity and Sustainability

All too often we have witnessed the unraveling of educational programs and initiatives when school leaders depart, funding dries up, and enthusiasm wavers. Careful attention to sustaining programs and building capacity by leveraging resources, adopting local policies, and celebrating successes is crucial to institutionalizing any initiative into the culture of a school community for the long term. Though the twelve California Democracy Schools described have achieved great success and put a number of features in place to sustain their programs, they must maintain vigilance and continue to nurture the vision of civic learning to prepare all their students for responsible citizenship.

Leverage Available Resources

Introducing civic learning as a stand-alone initiative can often feel like “one more program” to add to an already overwhelming educational program. A number of driving forces cause teachers and administrators to prioritize where they spend their limited funding, time, and available resources. All too often, civic learning is unwillingly cast aside for future planning.

However, if thoughtful educators and policymakers see the wisdom of aligning the value and outcomes of high quality civic learning to other educational initiatives, it becomes easier to leverage already existing funding, partnerships, and other opportunities to implement civic learning as part of a well-rounded education for all students.

As noted in Chapter One, there are many benefits to civic learning evidenced by a number of research findings. Several of these findings are reflected in goals and objectives of schools and districts across the nation.

- Building Civic Competencies
- Increasing Student Achievement
- Improving School Climate
- Reducing the Dropout Rate
- Implementing Common Core State Standards
- Increasing Literacy Skills

Ample funding is available from local, state, and federal government sources as well as private entities to support programming to achieve these goals. Utilizing the research on civic learning as rationale for these funds is a viable and practical approach to secure financial resources to support civic learning across schools and districts.

In California, the Local Control Funding Formula provides a unique opportunity for school districts to submit Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP) to utilize state funding to support civic learning in order to meet LCAP Priority Areas of:

- Student Achievement
- School Climate
- Student Engagement and Reducing the Dropout Rate
- Implementation of Common Core State Standards

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education under the direction of U.S. Secretary of Education John King issued a “Dear Colleague” letter that emphasizes the importance of using federal funding to support a well-rounded education for all students:

Ensuring that all students have access to a well-rounded education is central to our shared work to provide equitable educational opportunities for all students and prepare them to succeed in college, careers, and life.

A holistic education – one that includes access to social studies, including: history, civics, government, economics, and geography; music and art; world languages; sciences, including: physics, chemistry, computer science, and biology; physical and health education; career and technical education (CTE); and rigorous coursework of all types – allows educators to teach their students in a manner that promotes the promise of learning and provides students with the knowledge necessary to succeed in a complex society. The benefits of a holistic education demonstrate that, in addition to the core subjects of English/language arts and mathematics, access to a broad range of coursework is essential for students in today's world.³⁵

Based on this allowance, local school districts and state departments of education can include language in their plans to the U.S. Department of Education to utilize federal funds to support high quality civic learning programming for students.

Building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones provide ample opportunities to leverage resources to support civic learning programming. Presidential libraries, museums, colleges and universities, local and state government offices, non-profit organizations, and members of the business community all have a vested interest in preparing young people to be responsible citizens when they reach adulthood. Any individual or organization that is committed to creating a thriving, peaceful society can be a potential ally and partner in supporting civic learning in schools. Many of these organizations have financial and human resources to sponsor guest speakers, provide transportation for field trips, donate refreshments for meetings, finance or provide professional development for teachers, help with publicity and media coverage, or sponsor activities. It is not uncommon for partnerships to provide entree to funding sources and other networking opportunities.

³⁵ U.S. Department of Education <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/secletter/160713.html>

Adopt School/District Policies

Staff turnover is a perpetual challenge in school settings. Principals are transferred to other schools, teachers retire, and school board member terms expire. It is not unusual for initiatives to flounder when the school champions leave the site or district. New initiatives surface and priorities easily shift from year to year.

The surest way to sustain programs is to introduce and adopt policies that will maintain programming for the long-term. As noted earlier, the key criteria for the California Democracy School Initiative required schools to adopt policy to sustain their program once support from the grant ended. Chapter Two describes a number of examples in which schools instituted their civic learning programs through policies designed to sustain their work over time.

Consider the following options that will institutionalize civic learning programming over time. Examples can be found at the California Democracy School website at www.lacoe.edu/CaliforniaDemocracySchool.

- School Board Resolutions and Policies
- Mission Statements
- School/District Goals and Objectives
- Adopted Curriculum
- School Level Plans
- School Accountability Reports

Celebrate Success

Take advantage of the many opportunities to celebrate and showcase your success. They spark publicity, enthusiasm, and support from within the school and from the surrounding community.

Award Programs – A number of award programs provide opportunities for civic learning at your site to be recognized:

- **California Democracy School Recognition** – Elementary, middle, and high schools that have successfully institutionalized civic learning across one grade level or more, as described in Chapter Two can qualify to be recognized as a California Democracy School. Schools must provide evidence that policies and practices are in place to ensure that all students will engage in a high quality civic learning inquiry and investigation at least once while attending the school. The California Democracy School Planning Guide, rubric, observation form and other resources can be useful in clarifying the expectations. More information and an application form can be found at www.lacoe.edu/CaliforniaDemocracySchool.

- **California Civic Learning Award** - The Civic Learning Award for public schools is co-sponsored by California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson and California Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye who recognize and value the important role of public schools in preparing students for participation in our democracy, and have a partnership to support civic education in California. The awards are designed to both celebrate successful efforts to engage students in civic learning and to identify successful models that can be replicated in other schools.

The Civic Learning Award program has three levels: Awards of Excellence, Distinction, and Merit. Winners are selected by a panel of experts based on the depth and breadth of their civic learning classes, clubs, and programs. Award of Excellence winners receive a personal visit from Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye; Award of Distinction winners are visited by an appellate court justice; and superior court judicial officers will provide recognition to schools receiving the Award of Merit. Each winner in the top two categories receive a plaque and are invited to a California Gold Ribbon Award Banquet hosted by the California Department of Education. Information can be found at <http://www.courts.ca.gov/23201.htm> or <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/civiclearningaward.asp>

- **California School Boards Association Golden Bell Awards** - The CSBA Golden Bell Awards promotes excellence in education and school board governance by recognizing outstanding programs and governance practices of school boards in school districts and county offices of education throughout California. Golden Bell Awards reflect the depth and breadth of education programs and governance decisions supporting these programs that are necessary to address students' changing needs. A number of categories can highlight civic learning including the Juanita Haugen Memorial Award for Civic Education. More information can be found at <http://gb.csba.org>
- **California Gold Ribbon Schools program** – Sponsored by the California Department of Education, the Gold Ribbon Schools program honors some of California's outstanding public schools. Schools that are selected demonstrate exemplary achievements in implementing state standards in priority areas. Model programs and practices should include standards-based activities, projects, strategies, and practices that schools have adopted during this transitional period, which can be replicated by other local educational agencies. "Civic Education Awareness" is among the many target areas for schools to select in their application. More information can be found at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/gr/>
- **21st Century Exemplar Program** - The 21st Century Learning Exemplar Program is a cornerstone for the next stage of the 21st century skills movement. Through the Exemplar Program, the Partnership for 21st Century Learning is working to identify, document, promote and celebrate examples of successful 21st century learning. This program provides educators and communities a variety of models

to draw from, and offers policymakers and P21 State Partners local examples to help encourage their support. “Civic Literacy” is among the many Exemplar Topics. More information can be found at <http://www.p21.org/exemplar-program-case-studies/about-the-program>

Showcase Events – Take advantage of every opportunity to showcase the work of students. Many schools conduct civics fairs at their sites and invite families, school board members, community members, local and state policymakers, and local media to see the work conducted and interact with students. Make presentations at local, state, and national conferences. Participate in civic learning showcases conducted by the county office of education or other entities.

These types of events not only educate and inspire outsiders but also instill great pride and enthusiasm for students and educators engaged in the work. They also provide audience for potential funders and contributors. Examples of California Democracy School Showcase Events can be found at www.lacoe.edu/CaliforniaDemocracySchool.

Engage the Media – Whenever possible, invite the media to observe your program and engage with students. Many local media outlets continually look for local stories that promote achievements and human interest in local communities. Encourage your colleagues to submit op-ed articles to newspaper outlets and articles for professional journals. Submit press releases whenever possible to draw attention to events and accomplishments. Make use of social media to showcase your work and celebrate successes. Inviting high profile speakers to events often motivates the media to attend and provide coverage. When your story is “published” make best use of it by sharing it broadly. Use it to leverage additional support and resources.

C ONCLUSION

Conclusion



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The democratic principles we cherish most – liberty, justice, equality, freedom of religion, and freedom of expression can only be fully realized for all citizens if our society allows its members to share points of view, deliberate civilly with one another, and work toward finding common ground to peacefully solve problems and meet the challenges of the 21st century. Unfortunately, we have witnessed a deterioration of these civic habits in recent years and hence, the need for re-creating a just, civil society is needed now, more than ever.

United States Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy once stated,

*We must have a population that knows the meaning of freedom and its history. Every citizen, not just government officials, has the duty to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution. But you cannot preserve what you have not studied, you cannot protect what you do not comprehend, you cannot defend what you do not know.*³⁶

If we believe that our democracy is worth protecting and worth preserving for future generations, then we have an obligation to prepare young people for the responsibilities of citizenship. Schools can make a difference by providing the resources, time, and space for high quality civic learning to be a part of every child's education. This guide provides a glimpse at just one approach but there are many more.

We have the resources to do this work. With a bit of vision, political will, and a little hard work, your school can fulfill the mission of education by preparing young people for civic life in powerful ways. The next school board members, members of Congress, Senators, and Presidents of the United States are sitting in classrooms right now. It is up to us as educators to prepare our future leaders and to prepare all our future citizens to be productive, responsible, contributing members of our democratic society.

As retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and former member of the United States House of Representatives Lee H. Hamilton clearly articulate,

*Knowledge of our system of governance and our rights and responsibilities as citizens is not passed along through the gene pool. Each generation of Americans must be taught these basics. Families and parents have a key role to play, yet our schools remain the one universal experience we all have to gain civic knowledge and skills. That is the civic mission of schools. Only through education – which spans well over a decade of a child's life and encompasses that which takes place both within the classroom and outside of it – can we ensure that every young person can live up to Dr. Franklin's challenge.*³⁷

³⁶ U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, speech at American Bar Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, 2013.

³⁷ *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*, The Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, civicmissionofschools.org

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A [Blueprint](#) for Institutionalizing Civic Learning to
Prepare ALL Students for Civic Life in the 21st Century





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<http://www.lacoe.edu/CurriculumInstruction/HistorySocialScience/CaliforniaDemocracySchool.aspx>