

Civic Learning Partnership Toolkit



Findings From Pilot Civic Learning Partnerships

“The strength of our democratic institutions relies on the public’s understanding of those institutions.”

-Chief Justice of California Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye



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Welcome

An abundance of research shows that when K-12 students participate in rigorous and relevant civic education – including critical thinking, collaboration, research, communication, and taking action - they learn to care about and connect with their community and society and begin to understand that they can affect positive change. We have an opportunity to ensure that this kind of meaningful civic education is offered to all students, in all schools. By creating a Civic Learning Partnership, you can help ensure that all students in your county will experience the benefits of high-quality, collaborative, civic learning that:

- Enhances knowledge of our democracy, and 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;
- Creates a more positive school climate and has a positive impact on a wide range of outcomes for students, ranging from academic achievement to personal character;
- Decreases dropout rates. Service learning and participation in student governance has been found to predict high school graduation and college attendance and success;
- Supports the college and career readiness skills and abilities called for in the state academic content standards.

In 2014, the California Task Force on K–12 Civic Learning—appointed by Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson — issued a comprehensive set of recommendations to make quality civic learning available to all of California’s students. Pilot Civic Learning Partnerships (CLPs) formed in six counties around the state to promote the adoption of the Task Force’s recommendations at a local level.

The information included in this toolkit was compiled after analyzing the pilot partnerships in Alameda, Butte, Fresno, Los Angeles, Sacramento, and San Diego Counties. Each partnership generally used a three-pronged approach: recognizing school’s efforts, communicating about the importance of civic learning with education decision makers, and serving as a conduit for free, nonpartisan civic learning models and resources that can be accessed by all. As California has one of the largest and most diverse student populations in the country, and each county has its own set of challenges and opportunities, tools in this kit are presented as samples only, and will likely need to be tailored to specific communities.

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Disclaimer

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Civic Learning Partnership Checklist

To help you get started, the following is a sample roadmap for starting a Civic Learning Partnership in your County, based on findings from the six pilot partnerships throughout the state.

Leaders

Establish a small team of partnership leaders. Pilot Partnerships typically had three leaders: an education leader such as the county superintendent of schools or his/her designee, a judicial officer, and a business leader representing the Chamber of Commerce.

Staff and Volunteers

Identify at least one staff member or volunteer to assist with implementation of partnership goals and administrative tasks.

Goals

Draft overarching long-term goals and principles for the initiative; and measurable, achievable goals for each year.

Kickoff Partnership Meeting

Invite a broad group of leaders from education, business, law, government, and civic organizations to learn more about revitalizing civic learning in the county.

Partnership Activities

Engage in activities that support the partnership goals and capacities, such as promoting civic learning school board resolutions, Civic Learning Awards, and civic learning opportunities for students.

Regularly Convene and Communicate

Provide updates, meet to assess progress, adjust plans and goals as needed, and develop next steps.

Continue Outreach

Invite others to partnership meetings and events.

Consult

Confer with other partnerships on lessons learned.

Leaders



While you can structure your Civic Learning Partnership to best reflect and respond to the needs and opportunities of your county, below we have outlined the structure that worked for the pilot partnerships.

Overview

Establish a small team of partnership leaders.

- Pilot Partnerships typically had three leaders:
 - An education leader such as the county superintendent of schools or his/her designee
 - A judicial officer
 - A business leader representing the Chamber of Commerce
- Pilot Partnership leaders were high-level, well-respected nonpartisan countywide leaders.
- Pilot Partnerships sometimes expanded to include a steering committee of 5-10 leaders, who included leaders from areas such as philanthropy, health, local bar associations, and civic education organizations.

Findings

Pilot Partnership leaders developed an understanding of each of their respective roles and constraints. Following is a sample outline.

Judge/Judicial Officer

- Articulated why civic learning is important to the **judiciary**
 - Courts rely on educated citizenry to participate as jurors, witnesses, and litigants.
 - Californians have greater access to justice if they understand the role and function of the courts and concepts such as impartiality, the rule of law, and constitutional rights.

- Convened stakeholders
- Facilitated meetings
- Provided education about the courts/court tours/guest visits to classroom/lessons
- Recognized teachers and students for civic learning
- Modeled and represented the political neutrality of the group

Limitations and Considerations

Judges must adhere to a code of ethics, which includes but is not limited to the following provisions:

- Cannot fundraise
- Cannot lobby
- Cannot accept gifts
- Must be impartial

Business Representative

- Articulated why civic learning is important to the **business community**
 - Develops critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration skills
 - Upholding the rule of law creates a stable environment in which to do business
- Convened stakeholders
- Facilitated meetings
- Recognized teachers and students for civic learning

An Education Leader

- Articulated why civic learning is important for **students**
 - Role of public education is to prepare students for college, career, and civic life, as reflected in our state frameworks

- Students will have greater access to their democracy, and have their voices heard, through civic learning
- Civic learning can improve school climate and meet other Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) goals
- Provided opportunities for teachers to learn about research-based practices in civic learning as well as policies and documents that promote civic learning, such as the recently updated California History–Social Science Framework for curriculum
- Included civic learning on meeting agendas with superintendents, school site administrators, and teachers
- Provided superintendents, school site administrators, and teachers with access to nonpartisan educational lessons and methods as featured on My Digital Chalkboard
- Provided professional development opportunities for teachers in civic learning
- Recognized site administrators, teachers, and students for excellent and innovative civic learning
- Emphasized the importance of equity and access to civic learning

Limitations and Considerations

Superintendents of schools must work to support both state and local education policies, procedures, and priorities.

“Civic learning plays an important role in supporting our students by ensuring that they are properly informed and engaged citizens.”

-Tom Torlakson, State Superintendent
Of Public Instruction



Steering Committees or Committee Chairs

Some Pilot Partnerships benefited from bringing in other leaders as a small steering committee. Some of the leaders come from the following groups:

- **Local government:** Is increasingly committed to civic education, and leaders from local government were able to provide leadership, communication, and civic engagement opportunities for youth. The Institute for Local Government, through the Government Engaging Youth (GEY) grant, is developing a toolkit so that local governments can engage student interns. City or county staff who are affiliated with GEY or other efforts, such as a mayor or a representative of city council, could serve on a steering committee. To ensure a county-wide, nonpartisan focus, local government representation should be sought from more than one city, and include county leadership.
- **Nonprofit civic education groups/leaders:** Some counties have knowledgeable, nonpartisan, experienced civic education leaders in their communities and the Pilot Partnerships found that involving a nonprofit representative on the steering committee benefited all involved. Considerations include whether choosing one representative will appear to favor or endorse one group over another.
- **Higher education:** Many institutions of higher education have a commitment to or program focused on civic engagement, and a professor and/or administrator may be able to provide leadership and expertise.
- **Foundations:** One county had a foundation that was already providing funding in the area of civic engagement.
- **Bar associations:** Several counties have bar associations that are involved in the schools and civic education, and lead attorneys from those efforts have been active members of several steering committees.



Staff and Volunteers

Robust and effective Civic Learning Partnerships will require some administrative coordination. Below you will find suggestions for identifying administrative support, and examples of tasks requiring support.

Overview

Leaders identified at least one staff member or volunteer to assist with/implement the following partnership goals and administrative tasks:

- Meeting notes
- Meeting logistics
- Draft agendas
- Communications with list of partnership members
- Maintain and update list of partnership members
- Follow through on initiatives of the partnership

Findings

All Pilot Partnership leaders found it essential to have at least one staff member or volunteer to assist with implementation. The assistance sometimes came from staff at the county office of education, especially when that staff member already held a related position such as History-Social Science Consultant. Others came from the ranks of retired civic educators who were able and willing to be volunteers; and one came from the court. In some counties, partnership members or the leaders themselves performed some of tasks listed above.

The following are various ways in which the tasks were handled:

Meetings

- **Meeting notes:** A member of the partnership took notes at meetings; staff edited/finalized notes and sent them to members.
- **Meeting logistics:** Once the group found a suitable meeting place, meetings tended to recur at that location; staff or a volunteer often sent out the notice.
- **Agendas:** Once the group established the first few agendas for the meetings, leaders can and did modify them and staff or a volunteer sent them out.

Communications

- Several partnerships emailed updates to their members; these were often drafted by staff or a volunteer and approved by the leaders.
- Staff or a volunteer maintained the email distribution list, which required continual updating.
- Staff or volunteers also drafted letters to be signed by the leaders.
- In some pilot counties, partnerships shared opportunities and successes with local media through news releases and existing relationships with reporters and editors. (See Sample N)
- Some counties used social media to promote and amplify their work. (See Sample N)

Follow-through and Implementation

- While leaders often did initial outreach, staff or a volunteer often followed up. For example, some leaders sent out a letter promoting the Civic Learning Awards, and staff at the county office of education worked with schools to assist them in completing the applications.

“I feel so strong about the vital need of an informed and engaged citizenry for the success of our democracy that I had to be involved in this effort. Recruiting school districts was gratifyingly easy and I look forward to our Sacramento county districts developing curriculum and programs in their primary, middle and high school grades.”

-Roger Niello, Former CEO of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce





Goals

Overview

Leaders drafted overarching, long-term goals and principles for the initiative and measurable, achievable goals for each year.

- The overall long-term goal of the Pilot Partnerships was to provide a high-quality civic education, inclusive of the courts, to all the students in their counties
- The Pilot Partnerships' measurable yearly goals were to:
 - Achieve a minimum of three school boards passing resolutions endorsing civic learning
 - Provide school districts with free, nonpartisan civic learning lessons and resources for their classrooms, inclusive of the courts
 - Have at least one school apply for and win a Civic Learning Award
 - Host a year-end civic learning showcase, similar to a science fair

Findings

Many of the goals were based on the California Task Force on K–12 Civic Education final report: *Revitalizing Civic Learning in California: A Blueprint for Action*, which emphasized:

- **All K-12 Students:** Pilot Partnerships embraced the goal of expanding civic learning to include students in vocational education, English language learners, special education, foster youth, and court-involved youth.
- **High Quality:** Pilot Partnerships found it helpful to promote The Six Proven Practices identified by researchers, and as listed in the report; these practices are also reflected in the California History–Social Science Framework.
- **Inclusive of the Courts:** There are many aspects of civic education, from learning about checks and balances, to constitutional issues, and the role of Congress. As judges were part of the Pilot Partnerships, and the courts are often the least understood of the three branches of government, there was an effort to include education about the courts.

Short-Term Goals

While it was helpful to have a long-term goal of reaching all students, it was necessary to create interim goals:

■ Pass school board resolutions

The California School Boards Association created a sample school board resolution. More than 45 school districts across the six pilot counties passed resolutions, which together have jurisdiction over more than 500,000 students. (See Samples A, B)

Pilot Partnerships learned that school districts did not have to pass a school board resolution to make progress on civic learning, but it could be helpful in some cases. The idea behind this goal was threefold:

1. *Respect and protocol*—Before reaching out to the teachers and school site administrators, the Pilot Partnership wanted the school board to be informed of, and send a signal of support for, civic learning.
2. *Resources and reporting*—The superintendent could then designate staff to assist and/or report back to the school board on progress; and/or the partnership could then reach out to teachers and schools with nonpartisan civic education resources.
3. *LCAPs*—These activities could lead to the eventual inclusion of civic learning in Local Control Accountability Plans.

“Our civic learning partnership has collaborated with many disciplines to bring awareness to our schools and communities of the importance of civic learning and community engagement. Civic learning is fun and rewarding!”

-Judge Carolyn M. Caietti, Presiding Judge
of San Diego Superior Court Juvenile Division



- **Provide school districts with free, nonpartisan civic learning lessons and resources for their classrooms, inclusive of the courts**

My Digital Chalkboard: The Pilot Partnerships pooled their resources to create a new area on this website – the “go-to” site for teachers - for civic lessons, curricula, and other educational resources. The resources are free, nonpartisan, and noncommercial, and are searchable by grade level. (See Sample L)

The challenge was getting teachers and schools to access the resources. To get the word out to teachers, a flyer and hyperlinks from the website to individual school district webpages were created. (See Sample M)

- **Have at least one school apply for and win a Civic Learning Award**

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Chief Justice of California sponsor the Civic Learning Awards. The award recognizes schools for engaging all their students in high-quality civic education and identifies models that can be replicated. The award is open to elementary, middle, and high schools. Applications are available in the fall on both the California Courts and California Department of Education websites.

- **Host a year-end civic learning showcase, similar to a science fair**

Many civic education organizations as well as county offices of education host civic learning fairs where students display their civic learning and explain to the other participants what they have done and learned. Coordinating such events on a single day, or starting one where there has not been one, has been a role of the Pilot Partnerships. (See Sample C)

A photograph of three people smiling in an office setting. In the center is a man in a dark suit, white shirt, and striped tie. To his left is a woman with dark hair, and to his right is a woman with long blonde hair. An American flag is visible on the right side of the image. In the background, there is a window and a desk with a computer monitor and other items.

Kickoff Partnership Meeting

Pilot Civic Learning Partnerships held kick-off events to bring interested members of the community together to invite their participation. These events provided an opportunity to share information about the benefits of civic learning and highlight programs and practices that were working and could be replicated.

Overview

Invite a broad group of leaders from education, business, law, government, and civic organizations to learn more about revitalizing civic learning in the county.

- Leaders set the date, time, location, keynote speakers, and agenda. (See Sample D)
- Leaders developed an invitation list of 30–50 community leaders, with a goal of at least 30 attending.
- Leaders identified and developed materials to be provided. (See Samples E, F, G, J)
- Leaders planned an opportunity for the meeting participants to “sign up” to become involved in for the civic learning partnership and to offer assistance. (See Sample H)

Findings

Set the date, time, location, keynote speakers, and meeting agenda

- *Time:* Pilot Partnerships scheduled breakfast meetings; note that the partnerships had grant funding to pay for the breakfast.
- *Location:* Kickoff meetings were held in free, nonpolitical venues that communicated the spirit of civic learning as much as possible, such as a courthouse, a county office of education space, or a Chamber of Commerce meeting room.
- *Agenda/Speakers:* Pilot Partnership keynote speakers featured either Superintendent David Gordon (Sacramento County Office of Education) or Justice Judith McConnell (Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District), co-chairs of the California Task Force on K–12 Civic Learning.

- All Pilot Partnerships included a local student speaker who has been involved in civic learning, ideally from a civic learning award-winning school.
- See sample agenda (See Sample D)
- See sample PowerPoint slides for meeting (See Sample F)
- Leaders developed an invitation list of 30–50 community leaders, with a goal of at least 30 attending.
- Leaders often made personal calls and sent personal emails to other respected community leaders to invite them to attend.
- Leaders conducted broad outreach to other leaders that included, for example:
 - Local and statewide elected officials — or their representatives — from all three branches of government
 - PTA
 - League of Women Voters
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Local bar associations
 - School district (Association of California School Administrators)
 - California Teachers Association
 - California School Boards Association member
 - Local media
 - Student government representative
 - Local civic education groups
 - Local youth organizations, including youth representatives
 - Higher education representative
 - Local members of statewide advocacy groups such as ChildrenNow
 - Community groups working with ethnic groups
 - Law school representative (if available)
 - Law enforcement
 - Community groups working with ethnic groups
- Other
 - Sample invitation (See Sample I)
- Pilot Partnerships provided an opportunity for attendees to sign up as members and to indicate ways they can help. (See Sample H)
- Pilot Partnerships provided handout materials and showed videos that supported their goals, such as:
 - Civic Learning in California and the Power of Democracy
 - County civic learning highlights
 - California Task Force on K–12 Civic Learning
 - Relevant news articles

Partnership Activities



Overview

Engaged in activities that supported their goals, such as promoting civic learning school board resolutions, Civic Learning Awards, and civic learning opportunities for students.

- Leaders solicited input from members about activities to support their goals.
- Leaders leveraged existing resources and opportunities, such as the Civic Learning Awards.

Findings

Pilot Partnerships used some of the following strategies:

■ Civic Learning school board resolutions

- Provided a sample school board resolution to superintendents and school boards. (See Samples A, B)
- Leaders of the partnership met personally with local superintendents to discuss the reasons they think civic learning is so important.
- Leaders worked with county superintendents of schools and local superintendents to put civic learning on meeting agendas.

■ Civic Learning Awards

- Leaders and members followed up with local superintendents or their designated staff to encourage them to identify schools to apply for awards.
- Members of the partnership contacted their local schools and teachers to encourage them to apply for award.
- When a school won, partnership leaders and members congratulated the school by attending a related recognition event and/or sending a letter of recognition representing the partnership.

■ **Civic learning opportunities**

- Followed up with local superintendents or their designated staff to provide them with specific civic learning educational resources and discuss how best to provide them/engage teachers and students to utilize them

“A quality civic education must be a part of every child’s schooling, to teach them how to develop good character and be a good citizen .”

-David W. Gordon ,
Sacramento County Superintendent of Schools





Regularly Convene & Communicate

Overview

Partnership members provide updates, assess progress, adjust plans and goals as needed, and develop next steps.

- Convened members, typically quarterly
- Emailed all members with meeting notes and updates, typically quarterly

Findings

Convened members, typically quarterly

- One Pilot Partnership established two subcommittees: outreach and implementation. The outreach committee focused on school board resolutions and the implementation committee developed a civic learning showcase for the county.
- Some Pilot Partnerships found meetings essential to keep momentum and engagement.
- Pilot Partnerships found it useful to consider when convening.
 - Are members feeling engaged and following through? Are members clear about the actions they can take and what their roles are? Is there staff and/or a structure that assists with follow-through?
 - Who has the authority to make a needed change, and what is the process for making that change?
 - Does the partnership include a member who has experience with/or can be a guide through such processes?

Communicated with all members with reports/meeting notes

- **Emails:**
 - Conveyed the urgency and relevance of civic learning
 - Communicated and celebrated progress; recognized the contributions of their members
 - Connected with different audiences
 - One partnership communicated through social media



Continue Outreach

Overview

Invite others to participate in partnership meetings and events.

- Partnerships strove to be broad-based and to attract other well-respected leaders in the community.
- Partnerships continually added members by inviting potential members to meetings and events.

Findings

- Partnership membership was dynamic, with some members becoming more active over time and others becoming less active.
- Personal outreach by leaders to well-respected leaders in the community was effective. Further follow-up and involvement was then conducted via phone and email.
- Inviting potential members to meetings and events, such as civic showcases, provided opportunities to inform and inspire commitment.
- Partnerships benefited from asking themselves the following questions:
 - Who is missing from the membership?
 - Does the partnership represent the diversity of the county/community?
 - Are there current or emerging changes in demographics to be planned for?
 - How could all “corners” of the county be reached?
 - Who might help with specific outreach and communication?
 - Is our partnership balanced/will others perceive it as nonpartisan?

Consult

Lessons learned by Pilot Partnerships and other similar educational efforts include:

- Staffing is important to help with administration and implementation
- County school superintendents' support is necessary
- Focus on relationship building and conduct personal outreach
- Avoid politicization; find balance
- Seek visibility and positive publicity
- Maintain broad participation
- Build on existing efforts
- Achieve small, measurable successes
- Communicate
- Conference calls are often ineffective
- Much can be accomplished by a small group of 7–10 members
- Groups representing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and the arts have well-organized efforts to bring these subjects back into the curriculum and can be models, mentors, and partners.
- Promoting The Six Proven Practices in civic learning, and other research-based best practices, advances quality civic education. (See Sample K)

“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.”

-Justice Anthony Kennedy,
U.S. Supreme Court





Appendix

- A. Sample Civic Learning School Board Resolution
- B. Passed Civic Learning School Board Resolutions
- C. Sample Civic Learning Showcase Flyer
- D. Sample CLP Kickoff Agenda
- E. Sample CLP Guiding Principles
- F. Sample CLP Kickoff PowerPoint
- G. CA K–12 Civic Learning Task Force Report
- H. Sample CLP Kickoff Signup Sheet
- I. Sample CLP Kickoff Invitation
- J. Civic Learning Benefits to LCAP
- K. Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning
- L. My Digital Chalkboard Flyer
- M. My Digital Chalkboard Widget
- N. Media Plan

Additional Assistance

For more information on Civic Learning Partnerships and K-12 Civic Learning, visit the Power of Democracy website:
www.powerofdemocracy.org

Sample Civic Learning School Board Resolution

Developed in collaboration with the California School Boards Association

Adopted by the Board of Education

Resolution No. _____

College, Career and Civic Life

WHEREAS: It is the goal of _____ School District to prepare **all** of our students for college, career and civic life;

WHEREAS: Schools are a critical place for students to develop the civic knowledge, skills and values needed to effectively participate in our democracy, and research demonstrates that six core activities – known as the Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning – directly improve the quality and effectiveness of civic learning in schools. These practices are: classroom instruction in government, history, law and democracy; discussion of current events; service-learning; extra-curricular or co-curricular activities; student voice in school governance; and simulations of democratic processes;

WHEREAS: The success of our Nation and State depends on educated, informed and engaged citizens and residents, and California currently ranks 38th of 50 states in civic engagement;

WHEREAS: The education system has a major role in ensuring students have equitable access to learning to participate in our democracy. Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) recognizes the necessity of investing in the reduction and ultimate removal of inequitable outcomes. Revitalizing civic learning opportunities in an equitable manner can contribute to meeting these goals.

WHEREAS: We have much to gain by revitalizing civic learning. In addition to the chief benefits of a vibrant and informed civic life and democracy, high quality civic learning also helps teach children the skills they need for the 21st century workplace, such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, initiative, and innovation. In addition, it can improve school climate and safety, lower a schools' dropout rate and promote academic achievement, including in Common Core State Standards.

WHEREAS: There has never been a better – or more crucial time – to revitalize civic learning in our schools; as we implement sweeping changes we cannot leave civic learning behind.

WHEREAS: Resources are available to assist schools and teachers with revitalizing civic learning.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of _____ School District requests that the Superintendent and staff work toward creating and implementing a plan for developing the civic literacy of **all** its students by integrating the Six Proven Practices into

instructional practice and school life; and ensure that adequate time and resources are dedicated to this goal and the Superintendent/Staff will regularly update the Board of Education with students' civic learning progress. To achieve equity, diversity and inclusion, along with high levels of success:

- 1) The District will administer a short survey of all schools to identify exemplary civic learning and the survey will also be used to assist in developing plans for increasing equitable access to high quality civic learning in the district.
- 2) The District will submit at least one (more) school application for the Civic Learning Award in 2015 based on survey information. Award winning schools be invited to become part of a statewide network that shares ideas, instructional practices and resources for strengthening the research based proven practices in civic learning in their schools.
- 3) The Superintendent will report back on the outcomes of the survey and award application to the School Board on _____ (date).
- 4) A civic learning plan will be developed to include, but not be limited to, integrating civic learning into English Language Arts/English Language Development for all students across grade levels, by utilizing civic learning snapshots, vignettes and/or other examples provided by the ELA/ELD Framework and/or other resources as appropriate. Teachers will be invited to be part of a statewide network that shares ideas, instructional practices and resources for strengthening the research based proven practices in civic learning in their schools. The Superintendent will report back to the School Board on _____ (date)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of _____ School District will lead by example on what good participatory citizenship looks like by actively reaching out to our constituents, including students; carefully considering the needs and wishes of parents and students; thoroughly deliberating issues that come before us, working collaboratively, and appropriately delegating and supporting the Superintendent of Schools in carrying out the vision of the District so that the students' interests are best served.

Sample Civic Learning School Board Resolution

Developed in collaboration with the California School Boards Association

Adopted by the Board of Education

Resolution No. _____

College, Career and Civic Life

WHEREAS: It is the goal of _____ School District to prepare **all** of our students for college, career and civic life;

WHEREAS: Schools are a critical place for students to develop the civic knowledge, skills and values needed to effectively participate in our democracy, and research demonstrates that six core activities – known as the Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning – directly improve the quality and effectiveness of civic learning in schools. These practices are: classroom instruction in government, history, law and democracy; discussion of current events; service-learning; extra-curricular or co-curricular activities; student voice in school governance; and simulations of democratic processes;

WHEREAS: The success of our Nation and State depends on educated, informed and engaged citizens and residents, and California currently ranks 38th of 50 states in civic engagement;

WHEREAS: The education system has a major role in ensuring students have equitable access to learning to participate in our democracy. Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) recognizes the necessity of investing in the reduction and ultimate removal of inequitable outcomes. Revitalizing civic learning opportunities in an equitable manner can contribute to meeting these goals.

WHEREAS: We have much to gain by revitalizing civic learning. In addition to the chief benefits of a vibrant and informed civic life and democracy, high quality civic learning also helps teach children the skills they need for the 21st century workplace, such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, initiative, and innovation. In addition, it can improve school climate and safety, lower a schools' dropout rate and promote academic achievement, including in Common Core State Standards.

WHEREAS: There has never been a better – or more crucial time – to revitalize civic learning in our schools; as we implement sweeping changes we cannot leave civic learning behind.

WHEREAS: Resources are available to assist schools and teachers with revitalizing civic learning.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of _____ School District requests that the Superintendent and staff work toward creating and implementing a plan for developing the civic literacy of **all** its students by integrating the Six Proven Practices into

instructional practice and school life; and ensure that adequate time and resources are dedicated to this goal and the Superintendent/Staff will regularly update the Board of Education with students' civic learning progress. To achieve equity, diversity and inclusion, along with high levels of success:

- 1) The District will administer a short survey of all schools to identify exemplary civic learning and the survey will also be used to assist in developing plans for increasing equitable access to high quality civic learning in the district.
- 2) The District will submit at least one (more) school application for the Civic Learning Award in 2015 based on survey information. Award winning schools be invited to become part of a statewide network that shares ideas, instructional practices and resources for strengthening the research based proven practices in civic learning in their schools.
- 3) The Superintendent will report back on the outcomes of the survey and award application to the School Board on _____ (date).
- 4) A civic learning plan will be developed to include, but not be limited to, integrating civic learning into English Language Arts/English Language Development for all students across grade levels, by utilizing civic learning snapshots, vignettes and/or other examples provided by the ELA/ELD Framework and/or other resources as appropriate. Teachers will be invited to be part of a statewide network that shares ideas, instructional practices and resources for strengthening the research based proven practices in civic learning in their schools. The Superintendent will report back to the School Board on _____ (date)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of _____ School District will lead by example on what good participatory citizenship looks like by actively reaching out to our constituents, including students; carefully considering the needs and wishes of parents and students; thoroughly deliberating issues that come before us, working collaboratively, and appropriately delegating and supporting the Superintendent of Schools in carrying out the vision of the District so that the students' interests are best served.



Agenda Item Details

Meeting	Jul 14, 2015 - BOARD MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA
Category	5. CONSENT AGENDA
Subject	5.16 Culver City Unified School District Civics Learning Resolution
Type	Action
Recommended Action	That the Board approves the Culver City Unified School District Civics Learning Resolution.

Emphasizing the Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning:

- Classroom instruction in government, history, geography, law, democracy and economics;
- Discussion of current events and controversial issues;
- Service learning experiences that are directly linked to curriculum and instruction;
- Extracurricular activities;
- Student participation in school governance; and
- Simulations of democratic processes; and

This resolution for civics learning reinforces the mission of Culver City Unified School District that all Culver City students will Graduate with the Skills, Motivation, Curiosity and resilience to Succeed in their choice of College and Career in order to Lead and Participate in the society of Tomorrow and resolves that CCUSD will assist students as they develop the civic knowledge, skills and values needed to effectively contribute to and participate in our democracy and value the importance of civic duty.

[CCUSD Resolution.pdf \(29 KB\)](#)

Motion & Voting

(not specified)

Motion by Kathy Paspalis, second by Steve Levin.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY. Any individual with a disability who requires reasonable accommodation to participate in a board meeting, may request assistance by contacting the Superintendent's Office at 4034 Irving Place, Culver City, CA 90232. Phone Number: (310)842-4220 Fax Number: (310)842-4205

NOTE: The CCUSD TIP Hotline is (310) 535-2590. Culver City Unified School District meetings are

regularly scheduled for the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. Public records related to the public session agenda, that are distributed to the Governing Board less than 72 hours before a regular meeting, may be inspected by the public at the District Office, 4034 Irving Place in Culver City during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) A complete agenda is available for review in each school office and also available for pickup at the District Office. Visit the Culver City Unified School District Website at www.ccusd.org. Each school office has a suggestion box. We look forward to receiving your comments and suggestions.

BOARD OF EDUCATION CULVER CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of Support for Civic Learning: College, Career, and Civic Life

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, it is the Mission of Culver City Unified School District that All Culver City students will Graduate with the Skills, Motivation, Curiosity and resilience to Succeed in their choice of College and Career in order to Lead and Participate in the society of Tomorrow. We are currently preparing our students by offering them community service hours to promote the importance of civic duty; and

WHEREAS, schools are a critical place for students to develop the civic knowledge, skills and values needed to effectively contribute to and participate in our democracy. There has never been a better — or more crucial time — to revitalize civic learning in our schools; as we implement Common Core State Standards, we cannot leave civic learning behind; and WHEREAS, the success of our Nation and State depends on educated, informed and engaged citizens and residents, and California currently ranks 38th of 50 states in civic engagement; and

WHEREAS, the education system has a major role in ensuring students have equitable access to learning to participate in our democracy. Revitalizing civic learning opportunities can contribute to meeting these goals; and WHEREAS, we have much to gain by revitalizing high quality civic learning that encourages students to think critically, collaborate, develop research skills, assess and synthesize information, and present coherent arguments based on data. High quality civic learning also helps teach our students skills needed for the 21st century workplace including creativity, initiative and innovation; and

WHEREAS, the National Council for Social Studies framework providing guidance to enhance the rigor of K-12 civics education has identified Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning:

- Classroom instruction in government, history, geography, law, democracy and economics;**
- Discussion of current events and controversial issues;**
- Service learning experiences that are directly linked to curriculum and instruction;**
 - Extracurricular activities;**
- Student participation in school governance; and**
- Simulations of democratic processes; and**

WHEREAS, the district currently makes it possible for our students to be part of student government through Associated Student Bodies (ASB) where students run for officer positions and have a voice in student government; and

WHEREAS; the Common Core standards in History/Social Science work require that students learn to analyze multiple perspectives and be able to determine the central ideas or information of a primary and secondary source; and

WHEREAS, the students in Culver City Unified are being offered multiple opportunities to test their knowledge of analyzing primary and secondary sources through document based questioning and assessments that focus on primary and secondary sources; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of Culver City Unified School District requests that the Superintendent and staff make a commitment to work towards developing civic literacy of all its students by integrating the Six Proven Practices into instructional practice and school life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of Culver City Unified School District lead by example on what good participatory citizenship looks like by actively reaching out to constituents, including students; carefully considering the needs and wishes of parents and students; thoroughly deliberating issues that come before us, working collaboratively, and appropriately delegating and supporting the Superintendent of Public Education in carrying out the vision of the District so that the students' interests are best served.

Adopted and approved by the Board of Education of the Culver City Unified School District at a regular meeting held on the 14th day of July, 2015.

President

Member

Member

Vice President

Member

Superintendent

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
OF FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

In the Matter of Proclaiming the Value and Support of)
Civic Education in Fresno Unified School District)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, it is the goal of the district to prepare all students to be responsible, engaged, well-adjusted young adults, ready for college, career and civic life and,

WHEREAS, it is our shared responsibility with the community at large to demonstrate and promote active citizenship to foster conditions to ensure each generation strives to provide liberty and justice for all and,

WHEREAS, schools have been and remain a primary place for our youth to learn the civic knowledge, skills and values needed to effectively participate in our democracy and,

WHEREAS, the district supports the Six Proven Practices in Civic Education, which are:

1. classroom instruction in government, history, law and democracy;
2. discussion of current events;
3. service-learning;
4. extra-curricular or co-curricular activities;
5. student voice in school governance; and,
6. simulations of democratic processes; and,

WHEREAS, it is important to see Civic Engagement find ways to touch and inspire all students throughout the district during the school year and,

WHEREAS, while schools have a key role to play, this needs to be a community-wide effort and the schools, parents and community organizations need to work together and,

WHEREAS, the strength of our democracy depends on the active participation of all of its citizens, regardless of age, and voter registration and participation of youth is historically low and,

WHEREAS, young people play a critical role in our democracy by helping to choose the people who will lead us and by voicing their opinions on the issues that are important to them,

WHEREAS, the goals of Civic Education for our students include a vibrant, informed civic life, and democratic ideas,-which also helps teach students the skills they need for the 21st century workplace, such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, initiative, and innovation and,

WHEREAS, in addition, Civic Education can improve school climate, lower a schools' dropout rate and promote academic achievement, consistent with California State Standards and,

WHEREAS, it is important to provide faculty with the training and tools necessary to make Civic Education a focus from school year to school year.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Fresno Unified School District hereby proclaims the value and support of Civic Education and is committed to efforts aimed at the development of civic literacy of all its students.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Fresno Unified School District will lead by example on what good participatory citizenship looks like by considering the needs of parents and students; thoroughly deliberating issues that come before us, working collaboratively, and appropriately delegating and supporting the Superintendent, Principals and Teachers in carrying out the vision of the district so that our students' interests are best served.

***ADOPTED** this 28th day of October, 2015*

AYES: 9
NOES: 0
ABSENT: 0



Lindsay Cal Johnson, Board President



Michael E. Hanson, Superintendent

Galt Joint Union Elementary School District

Resolution No. 14

A Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Galt Joint Union Elementary School District to Promote Civic Learning in our Schools; College Career and Civic Life

WHEREAS: It is the goal of Galt Joint Union Elementary School District to prepare *all* of our students for college, career and civic life;

WHEREAS: Schools are a critical place for students to develop the civic knowledge, skills and values needed to effectively participate in our democracy, and research demonstrates that six core activities – known as the Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning – directly improve the quality and effectiveness of civic learning in schools. These practices are: classroom instruction in government, history, law and democracy; discussion of current events; service-learning; extra-curricular or co-curricular activities; student voice in school governance; and simulations of democratic processes;

WHEREAS: The success of our Nation and State depends on educated, informed and engaged citizens and residents, and California currently ranks 38th of 50 states in civic engagement;

WHEREAS: The education system has a major role in ensuring each student has equitable access to learning to participate in our democracy. Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) recognizes the necessity of investing in the reduction and ultimate removal of inequitable outcomes. Revitalizing civic learning opportunities in an equitable manner can contribute to meeting these goals.

WHEREAS: We have much to gain by building on our civic learning practices through our school community partnerships. In addition to the chief benefits of a vibrant and informed civic life and democracy, high quality civic learning also helps teach children the skills they need for the 21st century workplace, such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, initiative, and innovation. In addition, it can improve school climate and safety, lower a schools' dropout rate and promote academic achievement, including in Common Core State Standards.

WHEREAS: There has never been a better – or more crucial time – to revitalize civic learning in our schools; as we implement sweeping changes we cannot leave civic learning behind.

WHEREAS: Resources are available to assist schools and teachers with revitalizing civic learning.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of Galt Joint Union Elementary School District become a Civic Learning Partnership School District. The Board requests that the Superintendent and staff work toward creating and implementing a plan for developing the

civic literacy of **all** its students by integrating the Six Proven Practices into instructional practice and school life; and ensure that adequate time and resources are dedicated to this goal.

PASSED AND ADOPTED ON May 27, 2015, at the Regular Board meeting of the Board of Education, at the Galt City Hall Council Chamber by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

I hereby declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing Resolution was duly introduced, passed and adopted at the time and place noted and by vote stated.

Matthew Giblin
Clerk, Board of Education

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of Support for Civic Learning:)
College, Career, and Civic Life _____)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, it is the Mission of San Diego Unified School District that *All San Diego students will Graduate with the Skills, Motivation, Curiosity and resilience to Succeed in their choice of College and Career in order to Lead and Participate in the society of Tomorrow.* We are currently preparing our students by offering them community service hours to promote the importance of civic duty; and

WHEREAS, schools are a critical place for students to develop the civic knowledge, skills and values needed to effectively contribute to and participate in our democracy. There has never been a better – or more crucial time – to revitalize civic learning in our schools; as we implement Common Core State Standards, we cannot leave civic learning behind; and

WHEREAS, the success of our Nation and State depends on educated, informed and engaged citizens and residents, and California currently ranks 38th of 50 states in civic engagement; and

WHEREAS, the education system has a major role in ensuring students have equitable access to learning to participate in our democracy. Revitalizing civic learning opportunities can contribute to meeting these goals; and

WHEREAS, we have much to gain by revitalizing high quality civic learning that encourages students to think critically, collaborate, develop research skills, assess and synthesize information, and present coherent arguments based on data. High quality civic learning also helps teach our students skills needed for the 21st century workplace including creativity, initiative and innovation; and

WHEREAS, the National Council for Social Studies framework providing guidance to enhance the rigor of K-12 civics education has identified Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning:

- Classroom instruction in government, history, geography, law, democracy and economics;
- Discussion of current events and controversial issues;
- Service learning experiences that are directly linked to curriculum and instruction;
- Extracurricular activities;
- Student participation in school governance; and
- Simulations of democratic processes; and

WHEREAS, the district currently makes it possible for our students to be part of student government through Associated Student Bodies (ASB) where students run for officer positions and have a voice in student government; and

WHEREAS; the Common Core standards in History/Social Science work require that students learn to analyze multiple perspectives and be able to determine the central ideas or information of a primary and secondary source; and

WHEREAS, the students in San Diego Unified are being offered multiple opportunities to test their knowledge of analyzing primary and secondary sources through document based questioning and assessments that focus on primary and secondary sources; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of San Diego Unified School District requests that the Superintendent and staff make a commitment to work towards developing civic literacy of all its students by integrating the Six Proven Practices into instructional practice and school life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District establishes a goal to make schools aware of and encourage participation in the application for the annual Civic Learning Award.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a civic learning plan will be developed to include, but not be limited to, integrating civic learning into English Language Arts/English Language Development for all students across grade levels.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of San Diego Unified School District lead by example on what good participatory citizenship looks like by actively reaching out to constituents, including students; carefully considering the needs and wishes of parents and students; thoroughly deliberating issues that come before us, working collaboratively, and appropriately delegating and supporting the Superintendent of Public Education in carrying out the vision of the District so that the students' interests are best served.

Adopted and approved by the Board of Education of the San Diego Unified School District at a regular meeting held on the 14th of April 2015.

President

Vice President

Member

Member

Member

Superintendent

Save the Date
April 30, 2016
8am – 3pm



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FOUNDATION

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Sacramento
Office of Education **County**

California Civic Learning Statewide Showcase

There has never been a better – or a more crucial time - to revitalize civic learning in California. The health and future of our democracy calls upon schools to prepare students for a lifetime of knowledgeable, engaged, and active citizenship. Students, educators, and community members are invited to this very special showcase event to see what schools are doing to institutionalize civic learning to prepare ALL students for civic life in the 21st century.

Hear from state and local officials about the civic learning movement in California. Enjoy engaging student presentations that feature the California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative directed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Action Civics Initiative directed by the Sacramento County Office of Education.

Two locations to choose from:



The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

40 Presidential Drive
Simi Valley, CA 93065

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



Sacramento County Office of Education Conference Center

3661 Whitehead St. suite 100
Mather, CA 95655

<http://actioncivics.scoe.net>



For more information, please contact:

Michelle M. Herczog, Ed.D., Consultant III, History-Social Science, Los Angeles County Office of Education at Herczog_Michelle@lacoe.edu or (562) 922-6908 or

Frank Pisi, Curriculum Specialist, Sacramento County Office of Education at fpisi@scoe.net or (916) 228-2239

**California Civic Learning Partnership,
XX County**

Agenda

DATE

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Location (Civic Oriented)

Welcome and Meeting Purpose

Co-Chairs (Law, Education, Business)

Background on Civic Learning and Task Force

Recommendations

Civic Learning Task Force Co-Chair (special guest)

Civic Learning and Engagement in XX County

Student Speaker(s)

Closing Remarks & Next Steps

Co-Chairs

California Civic Learning Partnerships

Sample Guiding Principles

1. **Non-partisan:** This effort does not promote any particular political party, political agenda, or political ideology, but rather supports schools in educating all students in the knowledge, skills and dispositions they need to participate in our democracy.
2. **Research-based:** We are fortunate to have research-based proven practices in civic learning, and promote their implementation in schools.
3. **Equity:** This effort is committed to providing equal access to civic learning opportunities.
4. **Partnership with Schools, Teachers, Parents and Students:** The partnership seeks to support schools in their civic learning efforts.
5. **Legislation:** Partnership members may educate legislators about civic learning. The partnership is neutral on state education policy such as Common Core Standards. Judicial Officers cannot advocate for civic learning legislation.
6. **Fund development:** Judicial Officers may not be involved in soliciting funds for civic learning.

Civic Learning Partnership Kick Off Breakfast

XX County

DATE

Welcome

Leader 1

Leader 2

Leader 3

Civic Learning Task Force

Background and Recommendations

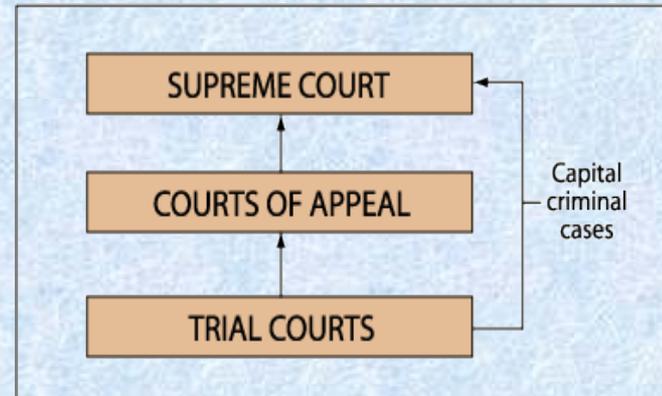
Hon. Judith McConnell, *Administrative Presiding Justice, Fourth Appellate District OR*

Superintendent David Gordon, *Sacramento County Schools*

Co-Chair of the California K-12 Civic Learning Task Force

Why is Judicial Branch is Concerned?

Courts - depend on an educated citizenry to participate; most Americans cannot even name 3 branches of government



Larger than the Judicial Branch

- **Voting** – less than 31% in mid-term election, 8% of eligible 18-24 year olds
- **Civic Engagement** – California is 38th of 50 states

CA Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning

Established jointly by:



Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye



State Superintendent of Public
Instruction Tom Torlakson

Task Force Members

Represent a diverse group of California civic leaders and educators, **examples** include:

Members (sample)

California Parent Teacher Association (CA PTA)

California Chamber of Commerce

California School Boards Association

California Teachers Association (CTA)

Mexican American Legal and Educational Defense Fund (MALDEF)



Advisory Members (sample)

Junior State of America

Constitutional Rights Foundation

Center for Civic Education

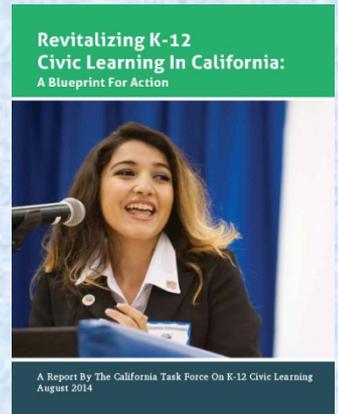
Teachers from Schools that won Civic Learning Awards

California Council for the Social Studies



Task Force Final Report: Recommendations

- Revise the CA History-Social Studies standards and curriculum frameworks to emphasize civic learning, starting in Kindergarten
- Integrate civic learning into state assessment and accountability systems
- Provide professional learning in civic learning research based practices – Six Proven Practices
- Develop an articulated sequence of instruction in civic learning across K-12
- Establish a communications mechanism between schools and community so students can get out of the building and leaders can come in.
- Integrate civic learning into Local Control Accountability Plans



Continuing the work of the Task Force



State Level

- State Board of Education updates the History-Social Science framework to make civic learning relevant and robust
- Civic Learning Awards for schools

Local Level

- Civic Learning Partnerships call for implementation of Task Force Recommendations – first six counties:
 - Alameda
 - Butte
 - Fresno
 - Los Angeles
 - Sacramento
 - San Diego

Top Quality Civic Learning is Possible



Civic Learning Awards and Highlights from XX County

Civic Learning Partnerships

Help all students in your county have access to high quality civic education – collaborate to implement the Task Force recommendations

Partnerships will work with local school boards to:

- **Pass a School Board Resolution, that may for example:**
 - Establish a goal that one or more of schools in the district will apply or win the Civic Learning award
 - Use Civic Learning to meet LCAP Priorities and/or other school district initiatives
- **Offer non-partisan, non-political civic learning support to schools, as appropriate, such as**
 - Links to on-line classroom resources and professional development
 - Offers of non-partisan, non-political speakers, field trips, and/or internships
 - Provide recognition for student and school civic learning in local media

Together we can make meaningful Civic Learning accessible to all students in XX County – and in all California schools!



CALIFORNIA TASK FORCE

ON K-12 CIVIC LEARNING

CALIFORNIA TASK FORCE ON K-12 CIVIC LEARNING

MR. DAVID GORDON
*Sacramento County Superintendent
of Schools and Task Force Co-Chair*

HON. JUDITH McCONNELL
*Administrative Presiding Justice, Fourth
Appellate District, Court of Appeal
and Task Force Co-Chair*

MR. CRAIG CHESLOG
Advisor to State Superintendent
MR. ALLAN CLARK
California School Employees Association

MS. SHELLEY GUPTON
California Teachers Association
HON. GARY HART (RET.)
Public Policy Institute

MR. ROBERT GUNNISON (RET.)
U.C. Berkeley School of Journalism
DR. MICHELLE HERCZOG
L.A. County Office of Education

MR. BILL HONIG
Instructional Quality Commission
DR. JOSEPH KAHNE
Civic Engagement Research Group

MR. PATRICK KELLY
State Bar of California
MS. CAROL KOCIVAR
California Parent Teacher Association

MS. CINDY MARKS
California School Board Association
MS. ALICE PETROSSIAN
*Association of California School
Administrators*

MS. DEBBIE O'DONOGHUE
California Secretary of State Office
DR. DARLINE ROBLES
Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools

MR. THOMAS SAENZ
*Mexican American Legal Defense
& Educational Fund*

MR. RICHARD TOM
California Bar Foundation

MS. JENNIFER WAGGONER
California League of Women Voters
MS. YVONNE WALKER
SEIU Local 1000

MR. ALLAN ZAREMBERG
California Chamber of Commerce

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ahanou@cde.ca.gov*

Civic Learning:

How It Benefits Local Control and Accountability Plan Priority Areas

The Local Control Funding Formula provides a unique opportunity for school districts to use the *Six Proven Practices of Civic Learning* to provide high-quality educational programs for all students. As schools and districts develop Local Control and Accountability Plans they are encouraged to consider research that demonstrates that civic learning is a powerful tool for meeting several of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) priority areas.

What Is Civic Learning?

Civic learning provides students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they need to be informed and engaged participants in our democracy. Research identifies six proven practices in civic learning:

1. Providing classroom instruction in Government, History, Law, Economics, and Democracy;
2. Combining community service and learning;
3. Discussing current events;
4. Giving students a voice in school governance;
5. Offering extracurricular clubs; and
6. Simulating democratic processes.¹

Benefits of Civic Learning to LCAP Priority Areas

- **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.²

- **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.

- **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.³ 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.⁴ 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.⁵

- **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.

Making Civic Learning Opportunities Available to All Students

Currently in California, low-income students and students of color are significantly less likely to have access to the proven practices in civic learning, and are therefore denied the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will enable them to access the power of our democracy. LCAP is an opportunity for local leaders to address this inequity and ensure that all students, including English Language Learners and Special Education students, are not just prepared for college and career, but to be informed and engaged citizens and residents of their communities.

Prepared by the California Task Force on K–12 Civic Learning, established by Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. For more information visit www.powerofdemocracy.org.

¹ Jonathan Gould, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Peter Levine, Ted McConnell, and David B. Smith, eds. *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*. Philadelphia: Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, 2011. Print.

² 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>

³ 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

⁴ *The Silent Epidemic*. Accessed via <https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/Documents/TheSilentEpidemic3-06FINAL.pdf>

⁵ 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

