



Creating Trust in Government Through Civics Education

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Presenters



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CAMPAIGN FOR THE CIVIC MISSION OF SCHOOLS



Educating for Democracy

The Council of State Governments

‘Creating Trust in Government Through Civic Education’

September 21, 2016





The Civic Mission of Schools

“Knowledge of our system of government, our rights and responsibilities as citizens, is not handed down through the gene pool... it must be taught and we have much work to do!”

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor
Co Chair of CMS





Why is Civic Learning important?

- Cornerstone of a strong democracy,
- Promotes support for our democratic institutions and values,
- Builds trust in government,
- Significantly contributes to civic involvement,
- Helps develop 21st Century Skills essential for success in college and career.





A long steady decline leads to...

- Since 1998, barely $\frac{1}{4}$ of students could demonstrate a (frankly dumbed down) proficiency in civics on NAEP tests,
- Large gaps in student attainment between population groups, a concerning and disenfranchising civic learning gap,
- Lack of civic knowledge & skills to participate.
 - Why???





Concerns over State Requirements and Instruction

- Three courses used to be the norm in high school, now usually one...often in 12th grade.
- State Standards have become overloaded lists of names, dates, places to memorize.
- Far too much instruction is concentration on structure rather than importance of civic participation.





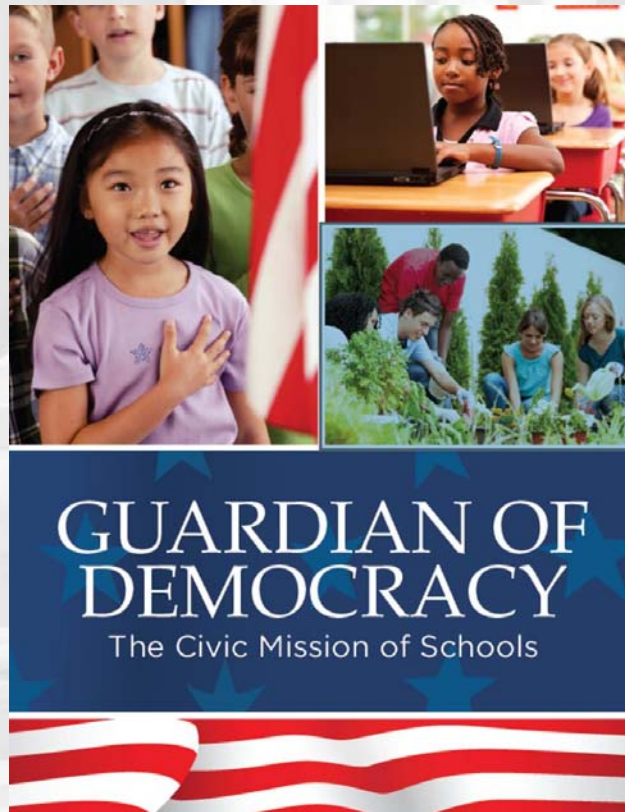
Concerns over State Requirements and Instruction

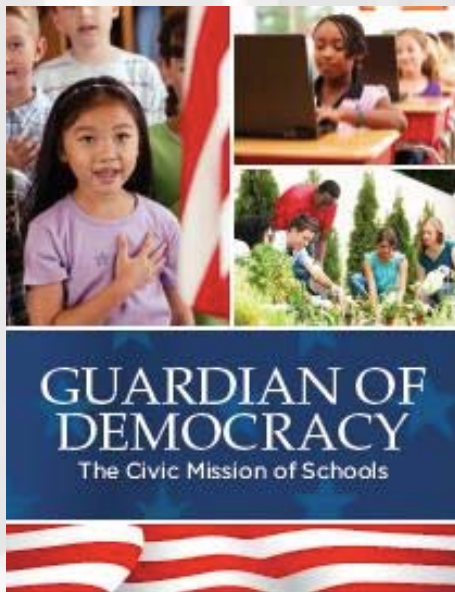
- Significant decrease in elementary time devoted to civic learning & social studies.
- Schools under AYP pressure cutting out civic learning and social studies.
- Over emphasis on a few subjects over all other subjects.





Civic Mission of Schools Report





www.civicmissionofschools.org

Civic Learning in the 21st Century

Preparation for College, Career, and Citizenship

Benefits of civic learning:

- 81% of high school dropouts said they would have been less likely to do so if there were more opportunities for experiential learning.
- Students who receive both traditional and interactive civics score highest on assessments and demonstrate high levels of 21st century skills like critical thinking, understanding news, and work ethic.
- Schools with civic learning programs are more likely to be “safe, inclusive, and respectful.”

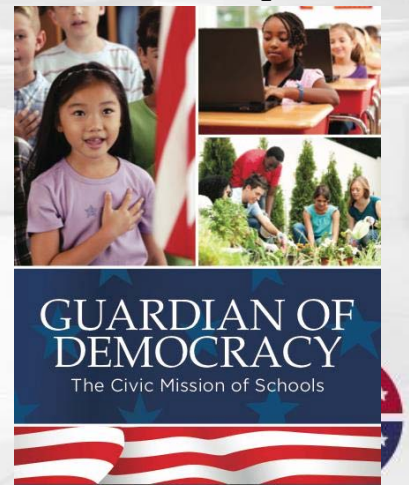
Students who receive effective civic learning are:

- 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.

Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools

The Six Proven Practices

1. **Classroom Instruction** in government, history, economics, law, geography and democracy.
2. **Discussion of Current Events and Controversial Issues** important to the lives of students.
3. **Service-Learning** linked to formal curriculum and classroom instruction to promote public policy solutions to real world problems.
4. **Extracurricular Activities** that involve students in school/community activities outside of the classroom.
5. **School Governance** that involves student participation.
6. **Simulations of Democratic Processes**

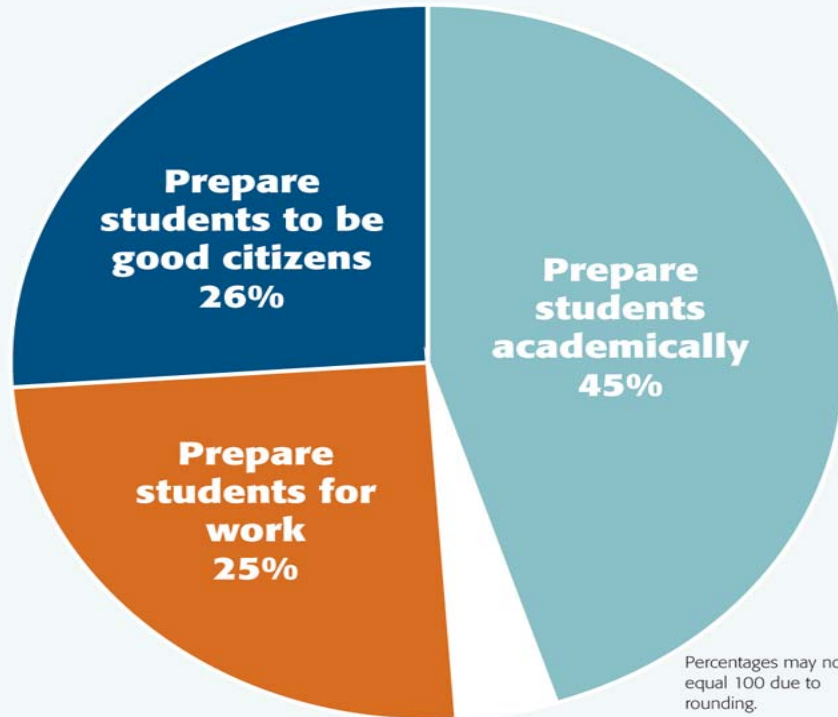




Turning a Corner for Civic Learning?

Main goal of public education

National totals, 2016



Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.





Turning a Corner for Civic Learning?

- ‘Every Student Succeeds Act’ of 2015 (ESEA)
- Devolves power & decision making to states,
- Student Support & Academic Enrichment Grants...Well Rounded Education .. plans being made now!
- Three new competitive grants for Civics & History,
- Civics/Social Studies IS one of 4 core subjects.





For More Information

Including best practice examples, sample policies, expanded information on Six Proven Practices and the latest Research.. Please visit

www.civicmissionofschools.org

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CAMPAIGN FOR THE CIVIC MISSION OF SCHOOLS



Educating for Democracy





Creating Trust in Government Through Civic Education The View From Higher Education

Andrew J. Seligsohn [[@CompactPrez](#)]
Campus Compact [[@Campus_Compact](#)]
compact.org

Higher education context

- Diversity among institutions
- Relative autonomy of institutions
- Declining public investment
- Liberal arts history
- Pressure to focus on job training

State policy: Massachusetts

- Civic learning as expected outcome for all public college graduates
- Defined as:

Civic learning means acquisition of the knowledge, the intellectual skills and the applied competencies that citizens need for informed and effective participation in civic and democratic life; it also means acquiring an understanding of the social values that underlie democratic structures and practices.

Massachusetts action plan

1. Attention to civic learning as a goal in campus strategic plans;
2. Facilitation and support for campus work in civic learning through conferences and meetings to share best practices and provision of funding for campus projects;
3. Development of new ways to measure and report students' civic learning outcomes;
4. Collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop a cross-sector plan for civic learning from kindergarten through college.



Campus Compact member practices

- Do you track participation in courses that:

Answer Choices	Responses	
Focus on diversity	41.25%	165
Build skills in deliberative discussion	25.50%	102
Involve simulations of democratic practices	16.00%	64
Contribute to democratic participation	21.50%	86
None of the Above	54.50%	218
Total Respondents: 400		

Campus Compact member practices

- Does your institution identify specific student outcomes for community engagement?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	53.00%	212
No	47.00%	188
Total		400

Campus Compact member practices

- In what areas do these student outcomes for community engagement fall?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Civic or democratic learning	80.56%	174
Critical thinking	81.94%	177
Engagement across differences	75.93%	164
Global learning	63.89%	138
Media literacy	20.83%	45
Policy knowledge	25.46%	55
Social justice orientation	64.35%	139
Other (please specify)	22.22%	48
Total Respondents: 216		

Associations: AAC&U and A Crucible Moment

- 2012 report published in partnership with the US Department of Education
- Called for making college student civic learning “pervasive and expected”
- Has led to increased collaboration among higher education associations, including creation of Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement network



Campus Compact efforts

- Urban and regional civic learning partnerships project with CUMU, Generation Citizen, and ECS
- 30th Anniversary Action Statement and Campus Civic Action Planning initiative
- Focus on integrating student engagement into broader institutional partnerships for the public good



Dick Simpson

Professor of political science
University of Illinois at Chicago



Questions?

Please submit them in the question box
of the GoToWebinar taskbar.

