



IN THIS ISSUE

Implementing The Civic Mission of Schools

This issue of *Service-Learning* focuses on the challenge of implementing a series of recommendations made by *The Civic Mission of Schools*.¹ This report, compiled by a diverse gathering of civic-education scholars and practitioners, assembled a comprehensive set of goals and recommendations for educators who wish to foster civic-engagement skills, knowledge, and attitudes in our nation's youth.

Debra Henzey, Executive Director of the North Carolina Education Consortium, describes her experiences coordinating and applying civic education initiatives at a statewide level. **Profiles** models six programs that reflect recommendations from *The Civic Mission of Schools*. **Centerfold** features findings and recommendations for measuring citizenship, compiled by the North Carolina Education Consortium. **Review Corner** reports on a new, CD ROM-based guide to implementing service learning. **FYI** offers an array of youth-oriented web sites that promote civic engagement. A list of upcoming service-learning **Conferences** and a **Mini-Catalog** of CRF's service-learning publications completes the issue.

¹ Sponsored by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) and Carnegie Corporation of New York in consultation with the Corporation for National and Community Service

The Civic Mission of Schools

In 2002, a distinguished group of the nation's most respected educational scholars and practitioners gathered in Washington, D.C. to discuss the fact that increasing numbers of Americans are disengaging from civic and political activity.

Representing diverse political views, disciplines, and approaches, these educators shared a common vision of a richer, more comprehensive approach to civic education in the United States. *The Civic Mission of Schools* is a powerful statement of that vision.

To expedite their vision, participants set about to identify goals, approaches, and recommendations to support civic-engagement principles. Adopting the premise that the overall **goal of civic education** should be to help young people gain and apply citizenship skills, knowledge, and attitudes, *The Civic Mission of Schools* also found that competent and responsible citizens:



The Civic Mission of Schools (CMS) identifies promising civic-engagement approaches. CRF's Cops & Kids program models one such approach, "participation in simulations of democratic processes." (Constitutional Rights Foundation)

- **Are informed and thoughtful.** They appreciate history and American democratic processes, understand community issues, think critically, understand diverse perspectives, and more.
- **Participate in their communities.**
- **Act politically.** They have the skills, knowledge, and commitment to address social issues, speak in public, influence public policy, and more.
- **Have moral and civic virtues.** They are concerned for the rights and welfare of others, are socially responsible, strike a balance between self-interest and the common good, and more.

The Civic Mission of Schools also recognizes that civic engagement can be especially difficult for young people who lack resources and are often discouraged from participating. Thus an essential goal of civic engagement is to provide skills, knowledge, and encouragement for *all* students.

The civic-education programs featured in **Profiles** (See pages 4-11) are intended to provide educators with living examples of the six Promising Approaches recommended by *The Civic Mission of Schools*.

For the complete findings of *The Civic Mission of Schools* visit the web site at www.civicmissionof-schools.org. Printed copies are available from Carnegie Corporation of New York, 437 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

State-Based Civics Initiatives

By Debra Henzey

Responsibility for implementing The Civic Mission of Schools' promising approaches to civic education falls on local and statewide educational organizations. North Carolina is fortunate to have just such an organization.

In 1997, state and local leaders across North Carolina forged a non-partisan partnership to address what was perceived as a critical gap in the education of our young people. The North Carolina Civic Education Consortium was formed in the School of Government at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in response to concerns that our state was paying a steep price for inadequate civic education. Lack of student interest in public service and a shortage of qualified civics teachers were only two symptoms of this pervasive problem.

Since state and local policies determine much of what happens in a classroom, the Consortium decided from the outset that a state-based effort would have the most impact. We have followed a grassroots-developed strategic plan that takes aim at the major barriers to civic education in classrooms and communities. These barriers include a lack of accountability for civic education in grades K-8, insufficient teacher preparation, and student disengagement from public life.

While the Consortium is still a young organization, we have learned a great deal about state-based, civic-education reform that can benefit other states. In the past two years, we have become a major advocate for service learning, primarily because we have seen it ignite potentially lifelong civic participation. We have been most successful serving as an umbrella organization for many diverse groups and individuals who care about civic education—from historians to teachers to community leaders to service-learning advocates. Successful programs include:

- Funding innovative programs through small grants.
- Providing teacher training.
- Hosting pilot programs, such as Project 540. (See Profile, page 10)
- Developing curriculum guidelines and standards.
- Documenting citizenship and translating the data into a Statewide Civic Index.¹

The Statewide Civic Index was designed to provide data for academic study, to foster public understanding, and impact policymakers. The results of this statewide study measures both youth and adult citizenship competencies. Many of the measures included in the Index originated in



CMS recommends that “schools should avoid teaching only rote facts about dry procedures...” Here, small-group work helps expedite a community exploration activity. (Constitutional Rights Foundation)

national studies about civic engagement, such as CIRCLE’s 2002 youth survey.

Despite their success, service-learning programs face substantial challenges in today’s classrooms. While current research indicates positive results from service-learning programs and projects, we need more research to document the impact of service learning on life-long civic habits. We recommend that federal funds be provided to groups like the Consortium to conduct long-term research and evaluation and to provide quality training for civics and history teachers so they can effectively apply service-learning strategies to their courses. In addition, the Consortium has appealed to the White House, asking that the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act more clearly reflect the Bush Administration’s support of civics, history, and service.

In conclusion, let me share a story of Lydia (not her real name), a student involved in Project 540. Lydia’s story tells us a great deal about effective civic education practices. Lydia’s school serves a rural, North Carolina mountain community with limited resources. The local economy is not healthy; many local manufacturing plants have closed. Lydia is a B and C student. She has participated in few school clubs or activities and she rarely speaks up in class. When Project 540° first got underway, Lydia participated only as required by her class. But, by the end of the project, she had become so passionate about its activities that she had become part of the leadership team.

¹ Excerpts from NCCE’s Statewide Civic Index can be found on page 8-9 of this issue of *Service-Learning NETWORK*.

When the Consortium visited her school, Lydia said several things that we, as educators and service-learning advocates, would all be wise to heed:

First, no one ever told her that this civics “stuff” was important—not her parents, not her friends and definitely not her school. “It never seemed relevant,” she said. “Now, I know why this social studies stuff is important.”

Second, she wanted me to know that students like her are “not stupid and we are not apathetic. Mrs. Henzey,” she said, “we are uninspired and unchallenged.”

I took away several other important lessons from Lydia’s experience and that of so many others:

- Civics and history are inextricably related subjects. We cannot teach one effectively without the other. Good citizens must have a historical framework to help them contextualize issues facing our nation today.
- Those who advocate for history and civics must work together to prevent the field of social studies from disappearing.
- History and civics benefit by being brought to life through good service programs and other interactive strategies. Pedagogy and content are both important.
- We are not simply trying to increase knowledge, we are trying to change what people do with that knowledge. This means that standardized testing is important, but we also need to look at other ways of measuring success in civic education.
- The goals, priorities, and recommendations enumerated in *The Civic Mission of Schools* need to be extended beyond instruction in civics and history. They need to be applied to school climate, school governance, character development, parental involvement, and community involvement. They need to embrace school as community and school as part of a larger community.

The Consortium’s experience has taught us that young people today are hungry for heroes, for an opportunity to make a difference, and to learn about things that matter. They are simply waiting for us to take up the challenge.

Debra Henzey, Executive Director of the North Carolina Civic Education Consortium, presented a paper on this topic before the White House Forum on American History, Civics & Service, May 1, 2003.

Active Citizenship Today

What is ACT?

Developed in 1993, **Active Citizenship Today** is a service-learning program that links the skills and knowledge students learn in the classroom to problems they find in their community. ACT uses a hands-on approach to political issues, government, and policy as they are manifested at a student-accessible, local level. ACT is built around a five-step, problem-solving framework.

Step I: Defining and Assessing Your Community. Students examine their community’s resources and problems.

Step II: Choosing and Researching a Problem. Students select a community problem and conduct research.

Step III: Examining Policy. Students learn what policy is; search community agencies to find out what is being done about the problem; evaluate policies; and take part in a policymaking simulation.

Step IV: Exploring Options. Students examine options for working on a community problem.

Step V: Taking Action. Students bring their learning and experience together to plan, implement, and evaluate a student-directed project.

By addressing the ACT framework, students come to see themselves as active citizens capable of participating in the political processes of a democracy.

ACT was developed in partnership by Close Up and Constitutional Rights Foundation through a generous grant from the DeWitt Wallace-Readers Digest Fund. For more information about ACT, visit CRF’s web site at www.crf-usa.org.

For more information about CRF’s service-learning programs and publications, visit www.crf-usa.org.

CityWorks—Local Government as a Service-Learning Laboratory

Promising Approach One : “Instruction in U.S. government, history, and democracy increases civic knowledge. . . . Avoid teaching only rote facts about dry procedures, which is unlikely to benefit students and may actually alienate them from politics.” *CityWorks* models this approach from *The Civic Mission of Schools*.

A high school history teacher, racing through all of American history in one year, reaches World War II on the last day of class. The teacher speeds through the lecture, almost finishing by the time the bell rings. As students get up to leave for the summer, the teacher shouts, “Have a good summer, and by the way, we won the war!”

Local government is the World War II of civics. Many teachers either touch lightly on local government or never reach it. Yet local government merits study. The purpose of government class is to prepare students for their roles as active citizens. Most quality of life and policy issues are decided on the local level. If students are to have a voice in these decisions, they will need to know about local government.

CityWorks

In response to this need, Constitutional Rights Foundation was awarded a generous grant from the Surdna Foundation of New York to develop and test a curriculum model that integrates service-learning into the process of teaching local government and citizenship at the high school level. *CityWorks* is the result.

CityWorks infuses the study of local government into mainstream government or civics courses. Taught in six one- to three-day units, each lesson is linked to the themes and content areas featured in standard government texts. Realistic issues and examples from a hypothetical town called Central Heights link each lesson to a major content segment of a typical government textbook. For example, after a unit on political process, a teacher can infuse a *CityWorks* lesson on political process *as it applies to local government*. This infusion enriches and reinforces student knowledge about national government, *and* covers additional content on local government linked to national and state standards.

In addition to the classroom lessons, *CityWorks* provides a civic-engagement component, involving students in projects that address community issues they care about. Here, students—usually working in groups—choose and research a community problem, examine policies dealing with it, and plan and implement a service-learning project to address it. Students also document and evaluate their experiences.

When students complete this unique curriculum, they will have developed a deeper understanding of local government and the role they, as citizens, can play.

CityWorks Evaluation

After two years of field testing, *CityWorks* was evaluated by Professor Joseph Kahne of Mills College and Bernadette Chi of U.C. Berkeley as part of the Surdna Foundation grant. The *CityWorks* evaluators gathered data from pre- and post-curriculum surveys from *CityWorks* classes and control (non-*CityWorks*) classrooms. The evaluators also observed classrooms and collected interview data through focus groups. Findings showed that *CityWorks*:

- Promoted greater commitments to participatory citizenship, justice-oriented citizenship and interest in service than non-*CityWorks* classes.
- Promotes greater commitments to personal responsibility, knowledge of social networks, leadership efficacy and civic efficacy than non-*CityWorks* classes.
- Fosters greater gains in knowledge than traditional classrooms as measured by the content assessment.
- Increases students’ sense of their capacities and commitments through participation in simulations, service learning, and exposure to role models. Of these, simulations and exposure to role models had the broadest impact.
- Provides opportunities to “learn about aspects of society that need changing” and opportunities to “work on issues that matter to students” had broad positive impact on students’ sense of their capacities and commitments.

The evaluation data also revealed that students who participated in *CityWorks* classes showed more interest in participating in civic life. The complete *CityWorks* Evaluation Summary can be found on the CRF web site at www.crf-usa.org/CityWorks_eval.

For more information about *CityWorks*, contact Todd Clark at Constitutional Rights Foundation. (213) 316-2103; e-mail: todd@crf-usa.org.

Discussing Current Issues

By Carolyn Pereira

Promising Approach Two: “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. . . .” *Discussing Current Issues* provides a methodology to implement this approach from *The Civic Mission of Schools*.

Providing opportunities for students to discuss current issues continues to be a challenge for educators everywhere. Discussing “current events” on Fridays is not the ideal presentation style. To effectively present current issues, educators need to address a series of pedagogical questions.

What issues should be included for discussion? Choices must go beyond what young people view as important to their lives. Students need help identifying significant issues and realizing *how* an issue is important to their lives. Current issues should:

1. Represent an enduring tension between democratic values.
2. Represent key disciplinary knowledge.
3. Be “hot” and have future importance.
4. Be aligned with curricular goals.
5. Be able to be researched.

How should current issues be selected? If students alone choose the issue, it will be more difficult to assure that the five criteria listed above are met. Not all students may be interested in an issue. Teachers might present students with a choice of issues. They could vote, discussing the winning issue or facilitate small group discussions of multiple issues.

How should the issue be discussed? Using a discussion model provides structure that leads to more productivity so that light, not just heat, is generated from the discussion. It also helps identify skills that students need to succeed such as listening, recognizing the differing types of disagreements, and asking good questions. Useful models include:

- Structured Academic Controversy¹ uses cooperative-learning strategies to help students listen carefully to arguments on both sides of a controversy. Students master their arguments and the arguments on the “other” side before they begin the discussion.
- The Harvard Public Issues Model² applies three types of questions that arise in discussing public issues: (1) factual questions and explanations; (2) definitional questions; and (3) ethical questions.

- The Civil Conversation Model (CRF/CRFC 1998)³, like a Socratic dialog, helps students form questions based on a text. Student questions should have no simple answers and be based on a text that requires interpretation.

All discussion models call for rules that require (1) a critical examination of readings; (2) listening carefully to what others say and checking for understanding; and (3) focusing on ideas, not personalities, thus treating people with respect.

Should a norm help all students to participate? A student’s culture may conflict with discussion norms. If faced with a cultural conflict, students with, for example, a language barrier, might be asked to be active listeners, i.e., to identify at discussion’s end any statements with which they agree (or disagree) and what new insights they have gained.

Can discussions move beyond the classroom? How can discussions relate to service learning? One measure of a discussion’s success is if students are still talking about the issue after the bell rings. Service opportunities abound for students to write op-eds or letters for a school or community newspaper, or to teach others about current issues. This form of service learning can make a powerful instruction strategy.

The Illinois Youth Summit⁴ combines discussion with service. Each year, the Summit focuses on issues chosen by students from a list provided by policy-makers and educators. This year students selected issues related to the balance of freedom and safety after 9/11. In preparation, they spent weeks in law and government classes conducting surveys, reading, and practicing discussion skills. At the Summit, students came together to discuss the chosen issues with key policy makers and students from other schools. Participating classes also taught other classes or wrote to newspapers and policy makers or prepared instructional materials for cable TV.

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¹ Smith, Randolph A., *Challenging your Preconceptions: Thinking critically about psychology*, by Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole, 1995

² Singleton, Laurel, Engaging Students in Public Issues “Discussions: A Necessary Challenge for Civic Educators,” *Social Education* 65 (7), pp. 413-418. *All rights reserved.*

³ For more information about conducting a civil conversation, visit the CRF web site at www.crf-usa.org/civil_conv.html.

⁴ The Illinois Youth Summit is a program of Constitutional Rights Foundation, Chicago. For more information, visit the CRFC web site at www.crfc.org/summit2003/.

Earth Force—Community Service and Classroom Instruction

By Scott Richardson

Promising Approach Three: “Service programs . . . that best develop engaged citizens are linked to the curriculum; consciously pursue civic outcomes. . . ; allow students to engage in meaningful work on serious public issues; give students a role in choosing and designing their projects; provide students with opportunities to reflect on the service work; allow students. . . to pursue political responses to problems and see service learning as part of a broader philosophy toward education.” *Earth Force* models this approach from *The Civic Mission of Schools*.

Earth Force teaches civics by engaging students in advocacy projects that address genuine community problems. Civic outcomes are targeted throughout a six-step service-learning framework that guides students through an Earth Force project.¹ The six-step framework is built on three underlying principles found in the *Civic Mission of Schools*: youth voice, long-term impact through influencing policies or practices, and fair and thorough consideration of diverse views on controversial issues.

Earth Force students begin a project by conducting an inventory of the environmental conditions in their community. Environment can be defined broadly to include quality-of-life issues (e.g., transportation and abandoned buildings) or more traditionally as the quality of local air, water, and land. Students define the community where they will work, which can be as narrow as the school grounds or as wide as an entire region. After identifying the region they will focus on, students take stock of the region’s environmental assets and problems.

Next, students choose an environmental problem within the region they have identified. They determine the size and scope of the problem and the extent to which students and community members care and can do something about it. Teachers also determine how to link the problem to the curriculum. Once students reach consensus on a problem they want to address, they explore its causes. Dealing with diverse student perspectives on these questions can help sharpen the definition of their problem. Focusing on problematic policies and practices helps students avoid “quick fix” projects that have little



Influencing public policy is a fruitful civic-engagement strategy. Activities include contacting legislators, jurists, and law-enforcement officials. (Center for Civic Education)

lasting impact on the community. Students are encouraged to influence policy to address their problem.

Next, students develop a problem-solving strategy. This step involves researching how others have tried to solve similar problems, and using democratic procedures to develop a strategy list that may include contacting legislators, writing letters to the editor, conducting community forums, circulating petitions, and surveying community members.

Next, students create a detailed action plan to carry out their strategy. They should plan to identify audiences, customize messages, build alliances, and engage other citizens. Students create a project calendar, identify and assign tasks and deadlines, and set standards for any project outcomes, e.g., what does an effective town meeting look like?

Earth Force teachers often play a critical role when students try to influence public policy and have little or no success in contacting public officials. The goal is to help students realize the value of the process, even when policies and practices are slow to change.

Reflection should occur throughout the process. Students are continuously challenged to think and talk about what they are learning and feeling, how their actions relate to course goals, and whether they are on the right track. Reflection should include a re-exploration of the original problem students identified and how their project affected themselves and the community. They also reflect on their successes and challenges, and determine how they and others can continue to address this problem.

Scott Richardson is Director of Research and Design at Earth Force. For more information about Earth Force, contact (703) 299-9400 or visit the web site at: www.earthforce.org.

¹ Earth Force wishes to thank the Constitutional Rights Foundation and the Close Up Foundation for their assistance in developing the Earth Force framework, which is adapted in part from their *Active Citizenship Today* program.

Junior State of America: Extra-Curricular Civic Education

By Richard Prosser

Promising Approach Four: "Offer extra-curricular activities that provide opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities. . . ." *Junior State* models is approach from *The Civic Mission of Schools*.

The American education system, along with other institutions in our society, has the ongoing responsibility of preparing each generation for the challenges of self-government. Much can—and must—be done in the classroom to meet this responsibility. But the classroom should only be the beginning of the learning experience.

Democracy cannot be learned solely from a textbook. Democracy must be experienced in order to be understood and appreciated. Extra-curricular political education programs should be available on every high school campus to enhance and expand what is offered in the social studies classrooms.

In most academic areas there are well-established extra-curricular programs. Science clubs, foreign language clubs, math clubs, speech and debate, drama, sports, and vocational clubs exist on almost every high school campus. Yet, how many campuses offer a social science club or extensive civics activities outside the classroom?

For almost 70 years, the Junior State of America (JSA), a non-partisan, extra-curricular program, sponsored by The Junior Statesmen Foundation, has given high school students practical experience in the art of self-government. As a school-based extra-curricular program, it begins where classroom curriculum leaves off.

The Junior State program has 500 chapters in high schools across the country. Over 20,000 students participate in Junior State programs each year. These chapters provide a model for a school-based extra-curricular program for students interested in politics and government.

Student-run extra-curricular civics programs can give young people opportunities to learn through active participation in public affairs. Through on-campus civics clubs, students can develop and practice some of the skills necessary for effective participation in democratic self-government. By facing the challenge of running their own extra-curricular programs, students have the opportunity to make their own decisions and to see the consequences of those decisions. Civics clubs that include debate and discussion give students the opportunity to develop their own views and to have their opinions challenged by other students.



Students and a facilitator from an after-school group participate in a Youth Summit at Los Angeles' City Hall. (Constitutional Rights Foundation)

Chapters on high school campuses conduct a wide variety of educational programs designed to acquaint their members and the entire student body with current political issues and the processes and institutions of American government. Student-initiated speaker programs bring major public officials onto campus for lively discussions between the leaders of today and the leaders of tomorrow.

During election years, Junior State chapters conduct student voter registration drives, participate in get-out-the-vote campaigns, sponsor candidates' nights, and conduct student-run Presidential Nominating Conventions. Chapters assist students in getting directly involved in the political process by encouraging them to work for the candidate of their choice. Many chapters sponsor forums that give students the opportunity to participate in seminars and debates on a wide variety of current topics. These events allow diverse political groups to share their varying perspectives directly with students.

Junior State uses an issue-oriented approach, including student legislative style debates and seminars with adult guest experts. This focus on issues and controversy brings public affairs alive for students and acquaints them with all aspects of political and governmental decision-making.

Student legislative debates give students a forum for understanding major public issues, sharpen their persuasive and intellectual skills, learn parliamentary procedure, and develop a respect for the opinions of others. Students advocate their own point of view, while others, with different perspectives, challenge their arguments, logic, facts, and assumptions. Everyone is invited to speak. The session climaxes with a vote on the issue.

The Junior State program provides a successful program model that helps high school students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for active, informed participation in public affairs.

Richard Prosser is Executive Director of The Junior Statesmen Foundation. For more information on Junior State of America, contact Junior State, San Mateo, California (800) 334-5353 or Washington, D.C. (800) 317-9338. Visit the web site at www.jsa.org.

Measuring Citizenship: The North Carolina 2003 Civic Index

Civic engagement is a primary component of service learning. In response to a need for more comprehensive and meaningful measures of civic engagement, the North Carolina Civic Education Consortium developed the *2003 North Carolina Civic Index*.

The Consortium polled nearly 800 non-voting age youth in North Carolina, ages 13–17. Young people were asked about their civic skills, behavior, knowledge, attitudes and opportunities. To establish a benchmark for the study, the Consortium surveyed 800 adults on the same issues.

This information was combined with existing data (voter turnout, charitable giving, and diversity in public office) to create the first-ever statewide assessment of civic education and engagement.

Summary

Findings contradict the perception of young people as apathetic and disengaged. They are more involved in community-service activities than previous generations of teenagers. Parents and family exert the greatest influence on youth citizenship development.



(Constitutional Rights Foundation)

Civic Involvement

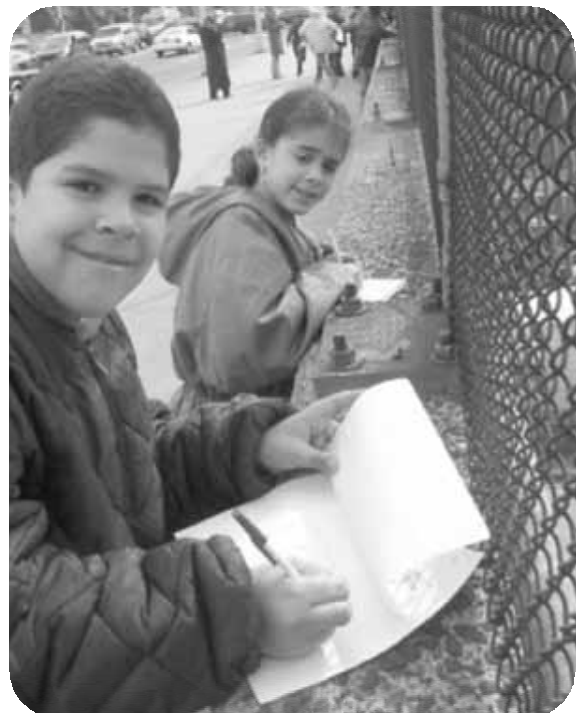
While youth involvement in political activities is low, the level of volunteerism or community service is higher than national studies have shown.

- 73% of youth respondents report doing community service in the past year, higher than adult respondents (64%).
- 26% of youth respondents report working in service projects that effectively address a real community issue or problem.
- Students report that they do NOT have opportunities to reflect upon service experiences or connect them to their civics studies.

Confidence vs. Knowledge

North Carolina youth have high levels of confidence in skills for civic participation, but they have low levels of knowledge and are not doing much with their civic participation skills.

- 9% of youth respondents could name both U.S. Senators.
- 31% knew that the General Assembly makes North Carolina state laws.
- 82% believe they are good at listening to others' ideas.
- 62% believe they know who to contact in their communities to get things done.



(Earth Force)

Measuring Citizenship: The North Carolina 2003 Civic Index

Income Gap

Adults and youth from higher income households (\$75,000/year or more) did better on most survey measurements. Results also revealed a gap for non-white households but not as large as the income gap.

- The income gap was most evident in the varying levels of trust in government and nonprofits.
- Youth from low-income households (\$20,000/year or less) are least likely to find good civic role models at home.
- 55% of low-income youth report talking about politics at home, as compared to 90% of high-income youth.
- The racial gap was evident in lower confidence levels about government, and lack of diversity in major elected offices and public boards.



Outside resource persons can enhance school-based, civic-engagement principles. Here, a General Motors engineer helps a Michigan student monitor local water quality. (Earth Force)



(Center for Civic Education)

Recommendations

Three simple strategies appear to be effective in terms of fostering civic involvement and higher levels of knowledge.

- Youth who talked about politics at home showed higher levels of civic and political involvement and more knowledge about governmental responsibilities.
- School-based, current-events discussions and relating civic studies to real community problems makes a substantial difference in civic engagement measurements. However . . . 50% of students polled have never done these activities in school.
- Meetings with public officials have high impact on youth interest in public service and confidence in government. However . . . 75% of youth polled have never had an opportunity to meet public officials.

For the complete findings of the North Carolina Civic Index, call the North Carolina Education Consortium (919) 962-8273 or visit the web site at www.log.unc.edu/programs/civiced/index.html.

Project 540°—Student Participation in School Governance

By Rick Battestoni

Promising Approach Five: “. . . giving students a voice in school governance is a promising way to encourage all young people to engage civically.” *Project 540°* models this approach from *The Civic Mission of Schools*:

In *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that “in America, the citizen does not acquire knowledge from books. He takes a lesson in forms of government by governing.” This spirit of participatory democracy lies at the heart of Project 540°, a national high-school, civic-engagement initiative.

Through Project 540°, students identify the issues they really care about in their school, community, nation, and world; they also look for civic-engagement opportunities in their high schools. Through dialogue, students create recommendations for action on the issues that matter to them. This brings them “full circle,” or 360 degrees, producing civic-action plans based on an understanding of what their school and community have to offer. Finally, they take an additional 180-degree turn to implement their action recommendations, totaling a 540° turn for civic change.

What have we learned in Project 540°? For one thing, we learned that—contrary to popular opinion—students are definitely *not* apathetic. They are passionate about a number of issues, and are quite interested in acting to make things better in their schools and communities. What *does* serve to inhibit student engagement is their widespread view that their opinions are neither sought nor valued.

We learned that in many schools, students wish to work on school-based issues that directly affect their lives and where they feel they might have some influence. Bathrooms and lunchrooms received the most attention from Project 540° students.

Students also proposed adding curricular options, adjusting the daily schedule, and changing absence and tardy policies. In Yukon, Oklahoma, for example, students succeeded in obtaining a \$65,000 budget allocation from the school board to install a unified bell and public-address system for the two different sections of Yukon High School, thus solving ongoing communications and tardiness problems.



CMS recommends the “discussion of issues. . . young people view as important to their lives.” (Project 540°)

Students have also chosen to tackle larger school facilities issues. In Oakland, California, students fought to keep an alternative high school open, and won. In rural Newport, Pennsylvania, students made their case to the local school board about the need for a new high school, and actually made the facilities issue the biggest topic in a recent school board election! In a rural Alabama high school, students developed an action plan that attempts to reverse a court order requiring the removal of a number of African-American teachers from a school that is 100% African-American in order to desegregate the faculty of the school.

Students have gone beyond the school to address community issues. In Boone County, Nebraska, students are working with public officials to build a new community center for young people. In Alameda County, California, the students at Redwood Alternative High School are working to get a skate park built. In Zuni, New Mexico, students on a reservation school are attempting to save a sacred salt lake from being strip mined.

At Los Angeles-area Bell Gardens High School—under the coordination of Constitutional Rights Foundation—the entire student body (3300 students) participated in Project 540° dialogues, many of which were conducted in Spanish. At Hialeah High School in Florida, ESL students provided pivotal leadership to the project as well as important ideas, a first according to teachers and administrators in that school. In Pittsfield, Massachusetts, “at-risk” students were targeted to serve as leaders for the project.

Efforts to involve students in school governance can raise important questions about how to promote school-based civic education. Prescriptions for the ills of youth civic disengagement often come in the form of curricular reform or innovation, in the hopes of boosting students’ civic knowledge. Civic knowledge is certainly important. But without addressing student *motivation* and *opportunity* to participate, our efforts to improve civic education certainly will fail.

Rick Battestoni is the Executive Director of Project 540°. For more information about Project 540°, contact Rick Battestoni, (401) 865-2787; e-mail: rickbatt@providence.edu.

We the People—Simulations of Democratic Processes and Procedures

By Robert Leming and Michael Fischer

Promising Approach Six: “Encourage students’ participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures. . . .” *We the People* models this approach from *The Civic Mission of Schools*:

In 1993, a study conducted by Professor Richard Brody of Stanford University, titled “Secondary Education and Political Attitudes¹,” confirmed that high school students taking part in the *We the People* program developed a stronger attachment to the political beliefs, attitudes, and values essential to living in a democracy than students studying other curricula.

Brody’s study also found an increase in student tolerance, political interest, and civic effectiveness if they participated in the program’s culmination activity, a simulated congressional hearing.

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution was developed by the Center for Civic Education in 1987 as part of the Commission of the Bicentennial of the United States. Billed as a national civic-education program that teaches students to engage in democratic processes and procedures, *We the People* focuses on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights and fundamental democratic principles.

A simulated congressional hearing engages students in dialogue where they apply their knowledge of the text and actively engage in discussion to form their own opinions and defend their stance.

Hearings divide a class into six teams. Although students are required to have full understanding of an entire text, each team focuses on the content of one unit. First, each team presents a four-minute statement that answers questions in their assigned unit. Next, judges ask impromptu questions as follow-up to each team’s statement and to probe the team’s understanding of constitutional issues involved. Then, the panel of judges evaluates student responses by applying criteria of understanding, constitutional application, reasoning, supporting evidence, responsiveness, and participation.

In preparation for the hearing, students in each team learn to apply constitutional principles addressed in their unit to their life, community, and current events, giving them a deeper understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

We the People’s approach to the Constitution provides an opportunity to participate in an approach also promoted by *The Civic Mission of Schools*: “Students should grasp the relationship between those documents, opportunities, controversies, rights and responsibilities that matter to them in the present.”

Students are also encouraged to engage in the discussion of issues on which they may have differing opinions, resulting in the development of interest in the opinions of their peers. *The Civic Mission of Schools* highlights that “sincere interest in others’ opinions, concern for the rights and welfare of others, and the ability to choose critically among positions in a debate” are the most important factors in cultivating tolerance and commitment to free speech in young people. The dialogue that occurs among *We the People* students encourages respect for the opinions of others, thereby teaching students how to address difference as it applies to the democratic process and in their own lives.

Surveys of *We the People* alumni revealed that:

- 82 percent voted in the November 2000 election, in contrast to the 48 percent turnout by their peers.
- 77 percent turned out for other elections for which they were eligible.
- 60 percent were very interested in national politics and national affairs.
- 42 percent discussed national politics nearly every day.

This promising data provides hope toward ending the cycle of apathy addressed in the *The Civic Mission of Schools*: “Americans under the age of 25 are less likely to vote than either their older counterparts or young people of past decades.”

Robert Leming is director of CCE’s We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution. Michael Fischer is director of CCE’s We the People: Project Citizen. For more information, contact the Center for Civic Education at (800) 350-4223 or visit the web site at www.civiced.org.

¹ www.civiced.org/research_validation.html

Looking Back, Going Forward: Three Professional Development Packages To Guide the Implementation of Service- Learning

Developed by James C. Toole, Ph.D; funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; adapted from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Retrospective of K-12 Service-Learning Projects; a project of CenterPoint Institute; distributed by the National Service-Learning Partnership, New York. 2002.

CD ROM (PC and Mac compatible) and downloadable handbook. With replicable forms.

At the completion of a recent funding cycle from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a group of educational and community service-learning grantees gathered to evaluate their experiences in planning, implementing, and sustaining their service-learning efforts.

During the evaluation sessions, a second objective emerged: to record the findings from this service-learning retrospective into professional-development modules that would offer off-the-shelf, easy-to-use materials to other service-learning practitioners. Both objectives have been realized in this publication.

Looking Back, Going Forward carries little introduction to rudimentary aspects of service learning. Rather, it focus on practitioners who are already involved in the field.

Distributed in an accessible CD-ROM format, *Looking Back, Going Forward* includes the following features:

- A 90-minute workshop plan that focuses on adoption, implementation, and institutionalization. Here, participants chose and discuss one of these three areas and its related findings in depth.
- A four-hour workshop adds a self-assessment instrument and participant reflection methods for all three change components.
- A study-group plan including readings on adoption, implementation, and institutionalization. This section is formatted as group discussion rather than as a workshop and includes lesson plans for fostering significant implementation of service-learning.



(Earth Force)

Each workshop plan includes workshop or lesson procedures, activities, discussion questions, handouts, and slides available both in PowerPoint and standard overhead transparencies.

The interactive CD offers 22 “Road Signs” to guide the service-learning implementation process. Through the different workshops, people can respond to the findings of the Kellogg group and add road signs based on their specific service-learning needs and experience. Facilitators can also easily adapt the content and design of lessons and workshops to meet their particular needs.

Looking Back, Going Forward is available free of charge through the National Service-Learning Partnership. To request a copy, e-mail nslp@aed.org or visit the National Service-Learning Partnership web site at www.service-learningpartnership.org.

Get the Latest with the CRF e-News

An electronic newsletter for the CRF community, the CRF e-News provides brief, user-friendly updates and access to web-based resources for educators and active citizens everywhere. Don't miss out. E-mail us at crf@crf-usa.org. On the subject line, write CRF e-News. In the message, put your name, school or organization, state, and e-mail address.



CONFERENCES

Uniting Generations to Build a Better World, October 15–18, Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.

Sponsored by Generations United, this international educational gathering focuses on intergenerational approaches and solutions to community problems. Featuring intergenerational program models from around the world; planning, development, implementation, and evaluation workshops; networking opportunities with international, national and local experts; up-to-date information about public policy issues and initiatives. **For more information,** call (202) 638-1263 or visit the web site at www.gu.org/conference03.htm.



2003 Conference on Teaching & Learning. What Works in Schools: Increasing Student Achievement Through Research-Based Practices, October 16–18, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Sponsored by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, this conference will explore research-based practices that support increased student and teacher learning and performance. **For more information,** call (800) 933-2723 or visit the web site. www.ascd.org/cms/index.cfm?TheViewID=447.

National Middle School Association's 30th Annual Conference: Middle Level on Our Minds, November 6–8, Atlanta, Georgia. Strands for this year's conference include community involvement, diverse school communities, effective leadership, listening to, understanding, and responding to young adolescents, quality teachers and teaching, responsive curriculum and instruction to meet high standards, safe and healthy schools, appropriate assessment and high standards, and school improvement. **For more information,** call (800) 528-6672 or visit the web site. www.nmsa.org/annualconf2003/atlanta.html.

The Annual TASH Conference, December 10–13, Chicago, Illinois. This conference focuses on strategies for achieving full inclusion for people with disabilities. The conference will feature breakout sessions, exhibits, roundtable discussions, poster sessions, and more. **For more information,** call (410) 828-8274 x101 or visit the web site www.tash.org/2003conference/index.htm.

Citizens Not Spectators: Fulfilling the Promise of Democracy, March 28–31, 2004, Orlando, Florida. Sponsored by National Youth Leadership Council. This 15th Annual National Service-Learning Conference will offer service-learning professional development to K–12 educators, administrators, pre-service teacher education staff and faculty, researchers, policy makers, youth leaders, parents, program coordinators, national service members, community-based organization staffs, and corporate and foundation officers. **For more information,** call (651) 631-3672 or visit the web site www.nylc.org/conference2004/index.cfm.

WEB RESOURCES



National Service Resource Center

The National Service Resource Center (NSRC) serves as a community-service clearinghouse for a network of organizations providing training and technical assistance to programs funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). An updated National Service Resource Center web site integrates resources, tools, and advice to make service-related information more readily accessible to young people and practitioners. Publications include:

- **Students Teaching Students: Handbook for Cross-Age Tutoring** An overview of what cross-age tutoring is, a history of how an elementary school program was designed and developed, and a collection of practical ideas, activities, and examples for tutor training and reflection, for tutor recognition, and for program evaluation.
- **Tips for Effective Service-Learning Projects in Out-of-School Time Programs** Tips, project ideas, and a list of resources to help incorporate service-learning into out-of-school time programs.

Both Guides are available as PDF Files. **For more information,** call (800) 860-2684 or visit the web site www.nationalserviceresources.org.

Youth Sites We Like

Youth Noise keeps youth abreast of national issues via the Internet. In a Take Action section, young people will find resources to Connect to Congress, Get Local, and Raise It (\$) and Donate It. Also includes information on local and national government and elected officials. www.youthnoise.com

Do Something features an Action Guide, resources for social issues ranging from AIDS to discrimination to teen pregnancy, profiles of student activists including steps the student took in order to address school and community problems. www.dosomething.org

Voices of Youth, sponsored by UNICEF, offers electronic forums for young people to discuss 21st prospects, child protection, HIV/AIDS, girls' education, media dialog, sustainable development, and more. www.unicef.org/voy/

The Youth Activism Project is a national clearinghouse strives to: promote youth civic engagement, train adults how to collaborate successfully with young people, and convince community, educational and government leaders to engage young people in meaningful roles and the decision-making process. www.youthactivism.com



Did you know. . .

In addition to *Service-Learning NETWORK*, CRF offers a wide variety of service-learning publications. CRF publications are perfect for schools and community-based organizations that want to plan and implement their own service-learning projects.

TAKE CHARGE: A Youth Guide to Community Change

NEW!!!

Grades 8–12

All across the nation, young people are learning how to create positive community change. Civic-participation projects help young people develop citizenship and leadership skills while they make the world a better place to live. . . for themselves and others.



Take Charge is a step-by-step manual for teaching citizenship and creating community change. Designed for school or community use, this straightforward guide shows young people how to work together to:

Explore and define their community and identify its needs and resources.

Look at policies that impact their lives and the life of their community.

Interact positively with local government, businesses, non-profits, and the media.

Plan and complete a project designed to create positive community change.

Evaluate progress and reflect on what they have learned.

Take Charge

#37025CNT 52 pp. \$16.95

CityYouth

Middle School

An exciting middle-school curriculum that integrates civic education and service learning into social studies, language arts, science, and math.

CityYouth's interactive lessons support team teaching, cooperative learning, portfolio assessment, and student service-learning projects. Two versions of CityYouth are now available.



CityYouth: Today's Communities

This version of CityYouth contains 32 lessons organized around four themes: Crime & Safety, Harmony, Health & Well-Being, and Environment. The lessons include readings, role plays, and simulations that help students use higher-level thinking skills to identify and analyze issues in their own school and community.

CityYouth guides students toward applying the concepts and skills they learn while they plan, complete, and evaluate service-learning projects.

Teacher's Guide: Contains step-by-step lesson plans, repro-ready masters of all student handouts, strategies for making school-community connections, and tools, methods, and rubrics for program evaluation and student assessment.

#61101CNT Teacher's Guide, 294 pp. \$39.95

CityYouth: U.S. History

This four-unit version of CityYouth is designed to support a U.S. history course of study. Each of the first four units contains lessons set in a historical era that introduce a theme students will explore and analyze.

Multidisciplinary lessons guide students toward applying what they learn through service-learning projects.

Unit 1: Leadership—American Revolution

Unit 2: Crime & Safety—Old West/ Reconstruction

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Terrorism in America

What can a democracy do to protect itself? Since the attacks on New York, Washington, D.C., and Oklahoma City, Americans must confront troubling issues about terrorism.



Terrorism in America provides current and historical perspectives on these issues.

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- The Oklahoma City bombing
- How other countries handle terrorism
- America's response to terrorism in 1919
- Changing our Constitution
- Talk radio
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Also included:

- Lessons to help students do a service project
- Teacher instructions for all lessons

Terrorism in America

#32010CNT Individual Copy, 54 pp. \$8.95



Youth and Police

Grades 6–9

Youth and Police is the perfect way to educate about the law, improve police-community relations, and involve middle-school youth in service-learning activities to improve public safety.



Youth and Police contains five core and five extension interactive lessons and comes with reproducible handout masters. Features lessons on the development of the modern police force, a simulation on issues of school safety, and an adaptation of CRF's renowned *Police Patrol* simulation. Then, working together with community police or school officers, students create and conduct their own service-learning project to improve community-police relations and neighborhood safety.

Extension lessons are on the use of force, the laws of arrest and search, the *Miranda* rule, and police governance and discipline.

- Promotes positive police-community relations.
- Helps students think critically about controversial issues.
- Blends law-related and service-learning strategies in one comprehensive package.

Youth and Police

50080CNT Integrated Teacher/Student Edition, 88 pp. \$16.95

The Challenge of Diversity

Linked to National Civic, and U.S. History Standards.

Grades 9–12

The third volume of a new series, this 72-page supplementary text provides an in-depth look at issues of racial and ethnic diversity in the United States. Provides students with ideas and resources for service-learning projects.



A separate teacher's guide provides instructions for interactive lessons based on the text.

- Fully illustrated with photos and cartoons.
- Perfect for 19th and 20th century U.S. history, government and civics, contemporary problems, and law-related courses.

Each lesson linked to civic, and U.S. history standards.

The Challenge of Diversity

- 10820CNT Student Edition, 72 pp. \$9.95
- 10821CNT Teacher's Guide, 40 pp. \$8.95
- 10822CNT Set of 10 Student Editions \$94.95

Civic Action Starters

Grades 9–12

Perfect for schools or youth groups, these starter kits offer stimulating, hands-on, and quick introductions to effective citizenship.

Citizenship Mini-Lessons

Citizenship Mini-Lessons provide 14 interactive lessons on citizenship knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Teacher materials include complete instructions for the lessons. Each lesson comes with a one-page student handout with a brief introduction, a short reading, an explanation of the activity, and discussion questions. Activities lead to action projects including opinion polling, policy analysis, community exploration, and getting involved.

35301CNT Citizenship Mini-Lessons, 30 pp. \$5.95

Civic Action Guide

Are you going to help young people do a service project? The *Civic Action Guide* gives you all you will need, including handouts that students can use to plan, implement, and evaluate a project and handouts sketching plans for community-service projects.

The *Civic Action Guide* also contains step-by-step teacher instructions for implementing the guide.

35302CNT Civic Action Guide, 25 pp. \$5.95

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Constitutional Rights Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan educational organization committed to helping our nation's young people to become active citizens and to understand the rule of law, the legal process, and their constitutional heritage.

Established in 1962, CRF is guided by a dedicated board of directors drawn from the worlds of law, business, government, education, and the media.

CRF's program areas include the California State Mock Trial, History Day in California, youth internship programs, youth leadership and civic participation programs, youth conferences, teacher professional development, and publications and curriculum materials.

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_____ I would like to learn more about CRF's publications on service learning and civic participation.

_____ Please send me basic guidelines on planning effective service-learning projects.

_____ I would like a free subscription to *Service-Learning NETWORK*.

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