CivXNow
Civic Education System Map
HOW TO MAKE K-12 CIVIC EDUCATION A PRIORITY IN SCHOOLS

A study of 7,200 respondents and 12,600 answers maps a path to strengthen K-12 civic education through three catalysts for change.

#CivXNow
Three Catalysts for Change
THREE FACTORS MAP A PATH TO IMPROVING THE OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND ENGAGEMENT.

1. MINDSET & VALUES: We must increase the public’s commitment to civic engagement and schools’ civic missions.

2. RELEVANCY & ENGAGEMENT: We must make civics relevant, which is effective both at making youth knowledgeable and helping change mindsets about the importance of civic engagement.

3. FEDERAL & STATE POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES: We must add civics to education mandates and include civics in student and school accountability measures. These are key direct catalysts to prioritizing civics in schools.

Civic Education Outcomes
THE MAP NAMES TWO EXPECTED OUTCOMES IF THESE STRATEGIES ARE IMPLEMENTED TO IMPROVE CIVIC EDUCATION:

1. KNOWLEDGE: A classic objective of K-12 civics is for young people to obtain knowledge (broadly defined), including rights and responsibilities. The map suggests that many factors would help improve youth civic knowledge. In turn, more knowledgeable youth would allow civics to address complex current topics better.

2. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: The purposes of civic education include encouraging civic engagement by young people: voting, and responsible participation in civil society. The map suggests that youth would be more civically engaged if schools made civics more of a priority and if they were more effective institutions. Funding would also help. The map further suggests that more youth engagement would lead to more knowledge.
Factors Without Leverage

THE MAP SHOWS SOME FACTORS ARE IMPORTANT, BUT DO NOT HAVE MUCH INFLUENCE IN IMPROVING CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND ENGAGEMENT:

COMBATING BIAS: In a world of political polarization, bias, and incivility, teachers need space to teach controversial issues but must also avoid demonstrating biases of their own. This cluster is about navigating that difficult political context so that students learn to reason, deliberate, and act well.

HEALTHY CIVIC LIFE: The map suggests that better K-12 civics would improve the civic climate for all Americans (including adults). However, respondents did not see a strong connection in the opposite direction.

HOW TO USE THE MAP:

GAIN INSIGHT:
• Into the causes of poor civic education
• Into catalysts for change

DIAGNOSE PROBLEMS:
• Your first job is as citizen, so why aren’t schools preparing students?

GAIN SUPPORT:
• Advise decision-makers in your school, district, state on how to prioritize civic education.

SIGN THE PLEDGE AND ADD YOUR VOICE.
CivXNow.org/pledge

SIGNATURE

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