



2020 Indiana Civic Education Task Force

RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

PRODUCED BY:
INDIANA BAR
FOUNDATION

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Dear fellow Hoosiers,

As chair of the Civic Education Task Force, I am delighted to present our final recommendations to improve civic education opportunities and practices for all Hoosiers. This report summarizes the work of the Civic Education Task Force which met throughout 2020 after being created from a recommendation of the 2019 Indiana Civic Health Index.

The role civic education plays in our communities is invaluable. Our democracy depends upon well informed citizens that are active and engaged in our communities and government at all levels. In order to maintain our “government of the people, by the people, and for the people,” we need to pass down civic knowledge from generation to generation. Public schools were created with the specific purpose of teaching future generations about civics and what we all need to know to fulfill our central role in the civic life in our communities, our state, and our country. The Civic Education Task Force was created to again shine a light on the importance of civic education and renew our collective commitment to making sure Hoosiers have the tools they need to ensure our communities and our democracy remain strong.

During this past year the task force met to hear expert testimony from civic education experts from around the country, to hear directly from Hoosier educators, and to develop effective policy changes and recommendations to advance civic education opportunities in Indiana. The members of the task force are among the state leaders in education, government, business, and nonprofit sectors and I want to thank them for their service and dedication to this important effort. I also want to thank all of the thousands of talented Hoosier educators that helped guide this process and who continue to work tirelessly on a daily basis to teach our future Hoosier leaders. Their support and input into this process provided an invaluable perspective to the task force and was vital in helping to develop and shape the recommendations that we hope will improve and advance civic education in Indiana.

Indiana is a state dedicated to improving our civic health, and that starts with civic education. The 2019 Civic Health Index was the fourth rendition, showing commitment to finding key areas to improve in our civic life. The effort of the Civic Education Task Force furthers this belief. Indiana is always seeking ways to innovate and improve our civic health showing that the Hoosier state desires to be at the forefront of initiatives to change for the better.

It is my great pleasure to share the final report of the task force with my fellow Hoosiers. I would also like to thank the staff and board of the Indiana Bar Foundation for their leadership in advancing civic education in Indiana and being instrumental in the work of the task force and producing this report. These recommendations identify areas that Indiana can improve in, innovate in, and restructure within the field of civic education. I urge policymakers and community stakeholders to help implement these recommendations over the coming years and to improve civic education opportunities for all Hoosiers in their communities and schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Crouch".

Suzanne Crouch
Lieutenant Governor, State of Indiana

Executive Summary

The Civic Education Task Force was convened based on the first of two recommendations of the 2019 Indiana Civic Health Index in an effort to research ways to improve pedagogy and practices in civic education and improve Indiana's overall civic health. The Indiana Citizen Education Foundation has pursued the second recommendation to increase voter turnout in Indiana from the bottom 10 of states to the top 10. This report and its recommendations are the culmination of expert testimony, research, and collaboration to develop actionable policy steps for Indiana to meet this goal.

Since its founding, the United States democracy has relied upon having an informed and active citizenry to maintain our system of ideals and beliefs. In order to be a government by, of and for the people, the populace needs to be engaged knowingly in civic processes. Civic education is one of the primary means by which we are held together as a state and country by equipping us with the tools we need to be the informed and engaged citizens our democracy requires to function and thrive.

Public schools were created and proliferated throughout the United States with the purpose of providing civic education, with many states citing civic education as the basis for the newly established schools¹. This is the essence of the civic mission of schools, which is for schools to pass down civic knowledge through generations and prepare children and young adults for their upcoming civic lives. This includes learning proper civic dispositions such as: 1) respect for the rule of law; 2) political attentiveness; 3) civic duty; 4) community involvement; 5) commitment to government service; and 6) the norms of political efficacy and political tolerance². The ability of a citizen to participate in modern U.S. democracy hinges on their understanding of and usage of these civic dispositions; a knowledge that is gained from quality civic education.

The Civic Education Task Force, upon consultation with civic education experts, conducted a survey of Indiana educators. The responses to this survey painted a picture of the issues in the current state of Indiana's civic education. Educators indicated in the survey that there is inconsistent or inadequate pre-service training, professional development, resources, financial backing, or curricular priorities in civic education. These responses from Indiana's front-line educators and administrators show a significant concern that civic education is not receiving the time, resources and priority it deserves compared to other school subjects.

The Civic Education Task Force held four meetings throughout 2020. The objective of the first meeting was to identify problem areas in Indiana's civic health and learn about effective policies and programs in civic education. The second meeting was focused on innovation in civic education in structure, assessment, and technology. The third meeting was about the survey results and development of recommendations. At the fourth and final meeting, the Task Force reviewed this report and voted to approve it. These meetings informed the task force about the direction, development, and implementation of these recommendations.

¹ See *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*
(<http://civicmission.s3.amazonaws.com/118/f0/5/171/1/Guardian-of-Democracyreport.pdf>)

² See Owen, Diana. (2015). High School Students' Acquisition of Civic Dispositions: The Impact of We the People.
(https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279941602_High_School_Students%27_Acquisition_of_Civic_Dispositions_The_Impact_of_We_the_People)

Indiana has plenty of reasons to be optimistic about the future in terms of civic education. As a state, Indiana is proud to be a national leader in the thoughtful and intrinsic evaluation of civic health. The fourth rendition of the Indiana Civic Health Index in 2019 (that brought about this Task Force) states “this societal checkup... keeps us on a path of improving our civic health by taking stock of our challenges, charting a course for improvement, and celebrating our success³.” Indiana is dedicated to improvement in civic health, and that starts with civic education, so Indiana should be optimistic about the developments these recommendations will bring.

The Civic Education Task Force, after deliberation and consultation from national and local experts, has arrived at the following recommendations:

PHASE ONE (2021-2023)

Civics Certifications and Credentials
Establish a democracy certified school program similar to that found in other states and modeled after the Indiana STEM certification program to encourage a holistic approach and improvement in civic education.
Establish a recognition program to recognize teachers, students, administrators, and schools for showing exemplary outcomes in civic learning.
Professional Development
Department of Education, public/private partnerships, and school districts should provide more quality opportunities and resources for teachers to seek professional development in civics.
Strengthen Community and School Interaction
Invigorate and expand the communities of practice around civic education.
Create opportunities for education and community partnerships.
Ensure that policies and practices related to school administration and culture reflect democratic ideals.
Prioritize youth engagement in democratic processes.
Creation of Civic Education Advocacy Coalition
Create a sustaining group or forum focused on promoting and improving civic education.

³ See 2019 Indiana Civic Health Index
https://inbf.org/Portals/0/Uploads/INCHI_2019_Final.pdf?ver=2019-11-04-143213-567

PHASE TWO (2024-2026)

Standards Revision
Craft revised State Standards with the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework as the basis, with the consultation of civic learning experts and advocates.
Increase civics course requirements at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
Pre-Service Teacher Content
Increase civics/political science course requirements for pre-service teachers to obtain licensure and a degree.
Assessment and Accountability
Indiana should ensure that authentic assessments are utilized to address the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that make up a comprehensive preparation for civic life.
Civic Project Graduation Requirement
Require that all students complete a civics project by the completion of the 5th and 8th grades.
Link this civics project graduation requirement with the employability skills component (project-based, service-based, and work-based learning experience) of the graduation pathway requirements set for 2024.

These recommendations are to be considered holistically and have been created to be able to work together. Each of these recommendations is complementary to the others and creates a brighter future for civic education in Indiana.

Introduction and Context

The 2019 Indiana Civic Health Index⁴ made two specific recommendations based upon a variety of metrics gathered from US Census data and the trends seen from this data over the past decade. The Civic Health Index identified these two recommendations because they were the best way to impact Indiana's overall civic health positively.

The first of these recommendations was to convene a civic education task force to study methods of instruction, programs, and educational outcomes to improve civic education opportunities for all ages and prepare specific policy recommendations to improve civic education opportunities and programs in Indiana. This report details the specific and actionable policy recommendations produced by the Civic Education Task Force with the consultation of national, state, and local experts. The second recommendation from the Civic Health Index was, with the 2020 election in mind, to aspire to increase voter turnout substantially with the goal of moving from the bottom 10 to the top 10 of states. This recommendation has been pursued by The Indiana Citizen Education Foundation, a nonpartisan, non-profit platform dedicated to increasing the number of informed, engaged Hoosier voters.

The Civic Education Task Force, chaired by Indiana Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch, was comprised of Indiana policymakers, educators, business leaders, and experts in civic education.⁵ The Task Force had four meetings. The first meeting took place in April 2020. At this meeting, the Task Force heard from national and state leaders about civic education policies and programs. Two Indiana educators (Janet Chandler, Hamilton Southeastern High School, Fishers and Molly Bowman, Eel River Elementary School, Fort Wayne) shared their experiences in teaching civic education under the current systems and structures. Additionally, Dr. Shawn Healy, Robert R. McCormick Foundation and chair of the Illinois Task Force on Civic Education and Ted McConnell, CivixNow Coalition, provided a national view on the importance, role, and mission of civic education to all young students.

The second meeting was in June 2020. At this meeting, the Task Force continued to gather information about innovations in civic education taking place. This included hearing about innovations in the structure of teaching civic education through a Democracy School program. Sonia Matthew, Robert R. McCormick Foundation; Lauren Cantacessi, teacher at Westinghouse College Prep High School in Chicago, IL; Jason Janczak, social studies department chair at Grayslake Central High School in Grays Lake, IL; and Brianna Croft, student at Normal West High School in Normal, IL, all shared their perspectives on the Democracy School program. Next, Beth Ratway, American Institutes for Research, Ryan Suskey, Ohio Center for Law-Related Education, and Greg Scheller, North High School in Evansville, showcased innovations in assessments in civic education, specifically, presenting the value of using authentic assessment models. Finally, at this meeting, Emma Humphries, iCivics, and Molly Joll, civics teacher at Jefferson Middle School in Valparaiso, demonstrated innovation in using technology in civic education, using iCivics as a case study.

In August 2020, the Task Force met for a third time to review the data from a statewide survey that the Task Force commissioned asking Hoosier educators a comprehensive range of questions about their experiences and opinions about the state of civic education in Indiana schools. This survey data and the material from the national and state experts was used by the Task Force's policy committee to develop a series of specific recommendations that were submitted to the full Task Force for its

⁴ See 2019 Indiana Civic Health Index (https://inbf.org/Portals/0/Uploads/INCHI_2019_Final.pdf?ver=2019-11-04-143213-567)

⁵ Appendix A: task force member list

review and input. Using input from this meeting, the Task Force has created its final recommendations, listed in this report.

At the Task Force's final meeting in October 2020, the final report was presented for approval along with a discussion of the plans for advancing the work of the Task Force. There was a specific discussion of what organizations could be partners to help advance the recommendations and how this effort could be sustained over time.

As referenced above, the Task Force conducted a survey on civic education in Indiana schools aiming to get a snapshot of the overall sentiment from educators and administrators about the state of civic education. This survey was conducted from May 18 to June 19, 2020 and had 544 total responses. The data collected from this survey⁶ will be referenced throughout the report. Although this was not a formalized academic survey, the information gained was valuable to address the root concern of educators about the state of civic education in Indiana.

Some conclusions drawn from the survey indicate students in Indiana are not consistently getting taught using current best practices in civic education. The data indicates that teachers don't feel that they are being given the proper teacher training and methodology in combination with a curriculum with specific dedication to civics. In addition, the data shows that teachers do not feel they have the resources, training, or time to teach civics properly due to the lack of accountability and lack of importance among other subjects, in practice and in the Indiana academic standards.

According to the survey data, there is a range of opinions from educators about if civic education is a high enough priority for their schools. Knowing the importance of civic education, especially at the elementary levels, this is a worrying trend amongst Indiana teachers and demonstrates the need for immediate action to improve civic education at all levels⁷. Educators also feel that they are undertrained to teach civics, with high school teachers being the only ones to record a 50% agreement level that they had adequate training in the subject⁸. Whether that be a lack of pre-service teaching requirements (which will be discussed with a later recommendation), a lack of professional development opportunities, or a lack of the curriculum and understanding of it, it is concerning to have educators who do not feel that they are sufficiently trained to teach all aspects of civics.

Schools are the guardians of democracy as they are the medium to pass along the information about why and how our democracy works. It is and historically has been the purpose of schools to create the informed citizenry our system of government requires to sustain it. "Families and parents have a key role to play, yet our schools remain the one universal experience we all have to gain civic knowledge and skills. That is the civic mission of schools⁹." As the Indiana Civic Health Index put it,

Civic education is one of the core principles that holds us together as a state and country by equipping us with the tools we need to be the informed and engaged citizens our democracy requires to function and thrive. Civic education serves as the "manual" for citizens to understand how they interact with their government at all levels, and indeed to know that there are different levels of government that each have unique roles and responsibilities. Just like learning to drive a car and understanding the

⁶ Appendix B: survey data

⁷ Appendix C: Figure 4

⁸ Appendix C: Figure 4

⁹ See *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*

(<http://civicmission.s3.amazonaws.com/118/f0/5/171/1/Guardian-of-Democracyreport.pdf>)

rules of the road through a driver's education class, quality civic education programs serve as the equivalent for learning the "rules of the road" to becoming a knowledgeable and engaged citizen¹⁰.

The Guardians of Democracy report also notes, "In a representative democracy, government is only as good as the citizens who elect its leaders, demand action on pressing issues, hold public officials accountable, and take action to help solve problems in their communities¹¹." The Indiana Civic Education Task Force takes this caution to heart with its recommendations.

In 2018, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) was administered with the intent of learning how knowledgeable and skilled 8th grade students were in democratic citizenship, government, and American Constitutional democracy¹². The results of this assessment were disheartening; not only because only 24% of students assessed out of a nationally representative sample performed at or above the NAEP proficient level on the civics exam, but also because there was no significant change from 2014, at 23%. The civic mission of schools is not currently being fulfilled nationwide and Indiana is no exception. The data that will be presented alongside the recommendations will help to explain this phenomenon.

As reported in the 2019 Indiana Civic Health Index, Indiana is committed and innovative when it comes to examinations of civic health. Indiana needs to remain at the forefront of introspective civic initiatives. This means addressing standards, maintaining up-to-date pedagogy, subscribing to efforts to increase opportunity for engagement and learning, and many more ways that will be discussed in the recommendations to follow. That is the goal and desire of the Civic Education Task Force in that Indiana will take these recommendations to heart and continue to review civic education in a thoughtful and meaningful way. The following recommendations will guide Indiana toward a better future in education, community, and participation in civic dispositions.

Civic education must be reinforced, enhanced, and embraced. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor noted, "the practice of democracy is not passed down through the gene pool. It must be taught and learned anew by each generation of citizen¹³." We are at a point where there is a noticeable opportunity for improvement in our modern education system nationwide. The Indiana Civic Education Task Force looks to our youth, our students, and our future, and with these recommendations, and strives to build the best in civic education for them.

¹⁰ See 2019 Indiana Civic Health Index

(https://inbf.org/Portals/0/Uploads/INCHI_2019_Final.pdf?ver=2019-11-04-143213-567)

¹¹ See *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*

(<http://civicmission.s3.amazonaws.com/118/f0/5/171/1/Guardian-of-Democracyreport.pdf>)

¹² See The Nation's Report Card 2018 NAEP Civics Assessment Results

(<https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics/>)

¹³ See ABA Survey of Civic Literacy Reveals Knowledge Gaps

(<https://www.americanbar.org/news/abanews/aba-news-archives/2019/05/aba-survey-of-civic-literacy-reveals-knowledge-gaps0/>)

Recommendations Report

PHASE ONE (2021-2023)

The recommendations in this report have been endorsed by the members of the Civic Education Task Force and are laid out in two phases: Phase One (2021-2023) and Phase Two (2024-2026). The purpose is to keep the implementation of the recommendations logical and structured in a timely fashion, as there are recommendations that are not as time sensitive or have an already pre-established timetable for implementation and revision. These recommendations are not ordered by any importance or relevance, rather by which are the feasible to do earlier or later due to funding, timing, and other contributing factors that made delineation of two separate phases useful.

These recommendations are to be seen holistically. Each recommendation is a contribution to improving civic education in Indiana, and potentially other states that may use this as a guide. As such, each recommendation should be viewed in a complementary light to all the other recommendations, and not viewed as though there is a limit to how many can be implemented. As seen earlier, the Task Force created these recommendations with the consultation from national, state, and local civic education policy and pedagogical experts so that the recommendations may work well with each other and make a cohesive idea for the future of civic education in Indiana.

As each recommendation is presented, it will be in a table that describes the recommendation succinctly, followed by an expanded explanation. The table also will have a 'levels of implementation' column describing realistic scenarios of implementation that could be employed for each recommendation. The Civic Education Task Force does not give an endorsement to which level of implementation should be used, although it hopes that the most robust level of implementation be used when possible.

Civics Certifications and Credentials

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Establish a democracy certified school program similar to that found in other states and modeled after the Indiana STEM certification program to encourage a holistic approach and improvement in civic education.	Use indicators or rubrics established by the programs previously set up by other states. Administration of the program by a statewide entity, like the Indiana Bar Foundation, through private/public partnerships. Implement through the Indiana Department of Education an altered and adapted STEM certification guide to the proposed 'Indiana democracy certified' school recognition program.	Aim to have 5 recognized democracy schools by 2022, 10 by 2024, and 30 by 2026. Aim to have 10 recognized democracy schools by 2022, 20 by 2024, and 60 by 2026. The Indiana Department of Education, in conjunction with the civic education advocacy coalition, should adapt the framework in place for STEM school certification to be fitting of 'Indiana democracy certified schools' implementation.

One of the nation's leading democracy school programs is in Illinois. The Illinois democracy school program is recognized in the education community for its innovative contributions to civic education, and thus we recommend that Indiana follow in the footsteps of our neighbor, while tailoring it to the unique traits of Indiana¹⁴. Creation of an Indiana 'democracy certified school' program will reimagine a school where democratic principles are embedded within the entire school culture and structure, allowing a reinvigoration of civic learning in curriculum and school environment leading to the creation of an active, engaged, and informed citizenry.

There are many tangible benefits to the creation of a 'democracy certified schools' program. This program could easily be the overall framework or structure by which many of the recommendations to come later in this report could be implemented. Creating an environment and school climate that strives to be the bastion of civics excellence will have many secondary effects. Civic education would be improved dramatically with the advocacy, creation of, and operation of schools and school districts that internally have the desire to improve in civics.

This recommendation can also be implemented in a similar way to what the state already does with a STEM certification system for schools. This can be another way to enhance and bolster civics within the culture of the school structure. Seeing the impact of the STEM certified school, the analogy to civics should similarly be embraced, given the importance of civics in the education community.

¹⁴ Appendix B: Summary of the elements and benefits of Democracy Schools as outlined by the Robert R. McCormick Foundation

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Establish a recognition program to recognize teachers, students, administrators, and schools for showing exemplary outcomes in civic learning.	E.g. certificates, competitive awards, and badges to be added to teacher licenses or diplomas. Schools individually gain recognition; school districts may be recognized when all their schools successfully apply through the 'democracy schools' recognition process.	Aim to implement this recognition process put in place by the DOE for the 2022 school year. Exemplify individual student achievement with statewide award given to top civics students. Design a seal of recognition similar to 'academic/technical honors' to be put on student diplomas.

The creation of a recognition program to recognize faculty and students for exemplary outcomes in civic learning would be an effective and low-cost way to foster interest and competition in civics. For students, an award like Indiana's Mr./Miss Basketball Award would give students and their teachers a chance to be recognized for their outstanding work. This civics-focused award could be structured as a 'youth citizen of the year' award designed to focus and highlight young Hoosiers who exemplify the model of a knowledgeable, engaged, civically minded and action-oriented citizen.

Another level of implementation of this recommendation would be the establishment of a seal of recognition to be put on a student's diploma. The state Department of Education or other policy-making body could establish a level of accomplishment a student must demonstrate to be awarded a diploma with honors in civics. Students would receive a seal of recognition to further exhibit their academic or technical achievement in the field of civics. In a similar vein, but on the other side of the equation, educators could have a similar award to showcase their commitment to civics as an academic pursuit. Additionally, schools and school districts overall could receive awards in civics similar to blue ribbon schools or STEM certified schools. These individual or group achievements are a simple way to spur interest into learning and teaching civics and to recognize the accomplishments of these worthy Hoosiers.

Recognition programs are an excellent way to encourage excellence and continuous, self-motivated improvement out of students, administrators, and faculty. We recommend that this certification guide be adapted and molded as a framework for a proposed Indiana 'democracy certified schools' program.

Professional Development

Professional development is potentially the most crucial element when considering how to improve the overall quality and standard of education across the board. In this section, relevant studies will demonstrate how more knowledgeable and informed teachers give better results to their students' learning outcomes, even if not in a high-level civics course. Enhanced and expanded professional development in civics will lead to student, educator, administrator, and community improvement.

Overwhelmingly, survey respondents indicated educators are interested in teaching civics as only 2.89% of respondents indicated they weren't interested in the subject¹⁵. Educators across Indiana are interested in being able to properly teach civics, if given the right opportunities and resources.

Indiana teachers are generally being supplied less formal professional development opportunities and instead must rely on their peers often to provide them with professional development. Elementary teachers fare worse when looking at their levels of agreement about whether they have opportunities to develop relevant skills from formal or informal opportunities¹⁶. This is one area in which the community of practice, a recommendation that comes later, could also effectively help.

Fewer than 40% of high school teachers, fewer than 30% of middle school teachers, and fewer than 10% of elementary teachers indicated that they agreed that there are adequate financial resources to support professional development activities. A majority of educators seem to agree that their school administrations are very supportive of their professional development, but there is not the perception that financial supports exist to receive formal training¹⁷. The lack of funding for professional development can be one reason that most educators agreed that they must rely on their peers for professional development.

¹⁵ Appendix C: Figure 1

¹⁶ Appendix C: Figure 2

¹⁷ Appendix C: Figure 3

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Department of Education, public/private partnerships, and school districts should provide more quality opportunities and resources for teachers to seek professional development in civics.	Educators teaching civics or cross-curricular civics across the state should participate in a professional development program whether it be a workshop, lecture, conference, etc. annually to maintain understanding of pedagogy. This requirement is only relevant to those actively teaching or in the coming year teaching civics.	Increase funding and support for civic education professional development.
	Amend the certification and re-certification process for civic educators in order to incentivize and ensure continuous development of civic knowledge. Professional development should focus on civics within social studies to bring consistency and coherence to civics knowledge of existing and pre-service educators.	Increase professional development and funding for virtual learning and/or training. Create professional development for cross-curricular civics instruction.
	Provide additional civic education professional development for teachers who are working with under-resourced and/or high-need students.	Work with community stakeholders and private organizations dedicated to civic learning and activities to increase private support and opportunities for civic education professional development.

In 2015, an academic study focused on Indiana students and teachers and reviewed their civic knowledge and dispositions. Specifically, the study entitled ‘High School Students’ Acquisition of Civic Knowledge: The Impact of We the People’, by Dr. Diana Owen at Georgetown University,¹⁸ concluded:

- High school students who took civics from a teacher who participated in high-quality civic education professional development would have higher political knowledge scores than students whose teacher did not have high-quality civic education professional development
- High school students who took a higher quality civic education class will have higher political knowledge scores than students who took traditional civics, social studies, or American government class.

This study concluded teachers participating in high-quality civic education professional development have a statistically significant higher impact on students’ acquisition of political knowledge. Students

¹⁸ See High School Students’ Acquisition of Civic Knowledge: The Impact of We the People (https://civiced.org/pdfs/research/ImpactofWethePeople_DianaOwen.pdf)

of teachers who undertook professional development focused around the We the People program scored higher on tests of their knowledge of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, political parties and elections, and race and politics than the control group of students (whose teachers did not have the same levels of professional development in civics). This study showed that teachers who get high-quality professional development and come prepared to use the knowledge gained through the continuing professional development to teach their class are better at providing students the civic knowledge they need regardless of it being a standard civics class or an advanced civics class. The teachers and course content both have an effect, but the teacher is the key.

In a subsequent 2018 national study, Dr. Owen expanded on her Indiana study and found similar results. In 'Evaluation of the We the People Program: Student Knowledge'¹⁹ it is found that the civic knowledge post-test score of students whose teachers had received civic education professional development was significantly higher than that of control group students. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of civic education professional development on high school student outcomes, specifically students' acquisition of knowledge of civics and American government.

These studies have provided significant evidence about the effectiveness of professional development in civics. Data from the survey conducted by the Civic Education Task Force reinforces the need for quality professional development that Dr. Owen's studies found as well.

In-service workshops are some of the more accessible professional development opportunities for educators seeking improvement. Educators are very likely to partake in civic education professional development opportunities that take little effort to attend considering their high level of interest in the subject. Considering how few educators indicated that they have been offered any in-service workshops, there is a large opportunity to fill this gap. Only 8.96% of educators, from all grade levels surveyed, answered that they had been offered an in-service workshop in civic education.²⁰ As far as professional development is concerned, Indiana has much room for improvement based upon the responses given to the Task Force from our educators. There is a clear interest level and desire to teach civics, as our educators understand the importance of civic education, but there are not the resources, curricula, financial support, or accountability to teach civics effectively.

Using technology to provide professional development is a logical step. From Dr. Owen's 2018 study 'Evaluation of the James Madison Legacy Project: Cohort 2 Student Knowledge'²¹, it is noted that the hybrid delivery, where a portion of the professional development may be electronic, is an entirely feasible option. In the increasingly electronic and interconnected world, hybrid professional development with resources supplied by a national, state, or local organization is likely to be the quickest, most cost effective and far reaching way to deliver high quality professional development in civics.

¹⁹ See Evaluation of the We the People Program: Student Knowledge (<https://cerl.georgetown.edu/evaluation-of-the-we-the-people-program-student-knowledge/#>)

²⁰ Appendix C: Figure 5

²¹ See Evaluation of the JMLP: Cohort II Student Knowledge (<http://jmlpresearch.org/research-1>)

Strengthen Community and School Interaction

Community and school interaction are foundational aspects to quality civic education, as students learning to become active and involved members of the community is a fundamental goal of civic education. Simulations of democratic processes or opportunity for student involvement in real democratic processes invigorates civic learning. Civic education doesn't live in the isolated vacuum of a classroom. It should be practiced in real life and in simulations of actual democratic occurrences. The recommendations here are about utilizing the connections and systems we have and making creative ways to increase potential student involvement.

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Invigorate and expand the communities of practice around Civic Education.	Civic educators should share, through a national or state organization like the National Council for Social Studies or the Indiana Council for the Social Studies, their best practices and curriculum to ensure a cohesive pedagogy.	Utilize social studies focused organizations and the Indiana Department of Education to strengthen a cohesive civic education community and peer network at all levels of education. Increase staff support and resources for civic education at the DOE.

As noted previously, teachers do not believe they have the financial resources or formal professional development opportunities in civic education that they desire. This can be alleviated to an extent by the expansion of a community of practice around civic education. The development of formal or informal opportunities for professional development by a state or national organization would give educators seeking improvement fast access to the best practice and pedagogy.

Fortunately, many of these communities of practice exist but they require more support and awareness in order to be more useful for civic educators. A significant benefit in this area would be derived by the Indiana Department of Education investing in additional professional staff who have subject matter expertise in civic education. This could also help in the area of professional development that was previously discussed where these more robust communities of practice and content experts could serve as a centralized source for identifying and promoting sources of civic education material to teachers around the state at all levels.

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Create opportunities for education and community partnerships.	Work with public and private organizations to see how they can help improve civic learning opportunities for all students by providing service-learning experiences like those delineated in the civic education standards.	Encourage organizations in the recommendation to participate incentivized with government funding for participation.
	Create an award that recognizes an individual/organizations contribution to civic education in Indiana.	Encourage all organizations listed to participate and award those who are exemplary and recognized through the created award.
	Facilitate collaboration between education communities and non-profits, agencies, business, etc. by leveraging existing trade groups or professional organizations and associations.	Encourage all organizations to participate.

The creation of partnerships between schools and the community would be beneficial for students. Public and private organizations should supply students with the opportunity to engage in democratic processes through service-learning to learn about how healthy communities function, so that when they are involved as adults, they will have an understanding of these important institutions. Being an engaged part of the community means more than just understanding the textbook definition of a community and community processes. Embedding students into the community will bring more learning and community engagement with all members and help train the community leaders of tomorrow. Youth engagement can lead to increased academic performance and improved social-emotional well-being. It helps young people build skills and networks that are valued in the workplace, and thus be a source of economic mobility.²² A high school diploma should certify that its recipient is prepared for the demands of active, engaged citizenship.

There are many examples of how this can be achieved. The Indiana Philanthropy Alliance and community foundations around the state have programs focused on youth philanthropy which give young Hoosiers the opportunity to try and address community issues and needs through actual philanthropic programs. Other examples in the area of state government are the YMCA's Youth in Government program and the American Legion's Hoosier Boys and Girls State programs that give students hands-on opportunities to serve in a mock state government with all three branches of government represented.

²² See Understanding Youth Civic Engagement: Why is it Important (<https://circle.tufts.edu/understanding-youth-civic-engagement/why-it-important>)

While there are excellent existing programs with community partners, they need to be expanded to reach more young Hoosiers and increase the number of community organizations that participate. By expanding the scope of the community partnerships, the level of participation and understanding of young Hoosiers into the role of community partnerships in the overall health and civic life of our local communities and our state will be enhanced.

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Ensure that policies and practices related to school administration and culture reflect democratic ideals.	Students should experience democratic practices throughout the school day.	State provides funding for professional development on strategies and techniques to ensure a healthy, democratic, and inclusive school climate in all schools.
	Adequate resources for training district and school officials on strategies and techniques are provided to ensure a healthy, democratic, and inclusive school climate in all schools.	State encourages public-private partnerships to provide resources for professional development on strategies and techniques to ensure a healthy, democratic, and inclusive school climate in all schools.
		State encourages educators to seek professional development for strategies and techniques to ensure a healthy, democratic, and inclusive school climate in all schools.

Enhancing the earlier recommendation of a democracy school, this recommendation can build on students understanding of democratic ideals and processes. Student involvement in democratic processes is vital to the understanding of how those processes work. Passively reading about elections, government offices, and business interaction with the government, for instance, will help give knowledge but not a fundamental understanding the way participation will. This recommendation will aid the effort to increase youth interaction in democratic processes. The goal of increasing Indiana community interaction in government can be partially reached by increasing the opportunity for youth to learn about democratic processes and potentially then be much more likely as adults to be involved in civic duties while also receiving invaluable education.

There are many meaningful ways that schools can incorporate meaningful student involvement that reflect democratic ideals. Some schools have incorporated student representatives on their school boards or other policy making structures. There can also be a role for students to work with school administrators to help identify issues in their school or community and be a partner to collaborate on finding workable solutions. Yet another way for students to be involved and empowered to incorporate

the idea of youth philanthropy previously mentioned through the school's educational foundation which many school districts now have.

This is another area where the democracy school framework can be employed to create award and recognition programs to recognize students, educators, school administrators, public or private organizations, or any community actors that heavily contribute to creating a school culture of democratic ideals in civic education in Indiana.

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Prioritize youth engagement in democratic processes	Encourage youth to engage in modern democratic processes and stay informed and active in the electoral process. State, public/private partnerships, and community organizations should encourage and facilitate youth representation and participation on local boards, commissions, and other governing bodies.	Create opportunities and eliminate barriers for youth involvement in governmental and other democratic processes. Promote voter registration and turnout by high school seniors.

Civic education takes place outside the K-12 schoolhouse as well. Students must also be in a supportive school environment to fully realize the recommendations listed in this report. Schooling may be the vehicle that teaches students about the American system of government but being a part of government happens in real life. Thus, schools must have an environment that reflects democratic ideals to expose students to proper democratic processes and then bring them into society. In order to develop proper civic dispositions, students must be in a healthy and encouraging environment to learn, share, and participate. Ensuring that policies and practices of schools reflect democratic ideals will help to maintain the civic mission of schools, and to aid in the implementation of the next recommendation.

Parents also play a vital role in the development of their child's civic dispositions. Parents and teachers should be encouraged to act as role models of how an active and engaged citizen should act. As a part of the holistic view of civic education, parents of students should strive to create a similar environment as the student experiences at school through the promotion of proper civic dispositions.

Development of these civic dispositions is crucial for understanding and operation of a democracy. These dispositions enable people to become independent thinkers in society that respect the moral and legal obligations of a democracy and take personal responsibility for their actions.²³ Those who are aware of this can have discussions about political issues in a civil and constructive way. This attitude is what makes our democracy functional.

²³See Owen, Diana. (2015). High School Students' Acquisition of Civic Dispositions: The Impact of We the People. (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279941602_High_School_Students%27_Acquisition_of_Civic_Dispositions_The_Impact_of_We_the_People)”

The research and expert testimony presented to the Task Force shows that we have a blueprint for creating active, engaged, and informed citizens. It is important that Indiana enacts the recommendations about strengthening pedagogy and curricula and should enact this recommendation to provide students a place to exercise and cement their newfound knowledge. Students need avenues to participate in civic processes if they are expected to become functioning and knowledgeable citizens.

In a 2015 study led by Diane Owen called 'High School Students' Acquisition of Civic Dispositions: The Impact of We the People,'²⁴ the acquisition of civic dispositions was measured in high school students taking courses with and without We the People curricula and teachers. The civic dispositions that were measured were 1) respect for the rule of law; 2) political attentiveness; 3) civic duty; 4) community involvement; 5) commitment to government service; and 6) the norms of political efficacy and political tolerance. The findings were clear that civics instruction is positively related to students' development of civic dispositions. Students with teachers who had undergone civic education professional development, and especially those who were also in the high-quality civics class, were much more likely to participate in these civic dispositions than before taking the course.

A very recent report by the respected Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts University underscores the importance of connecting young Hoosiers to our state's civic life by encouraging them to take the first step toward becoming a voter: registering. CIRCLE's researchers looked inside the voter registration files of 39 states to compare August 2020 to November 2016. The study showed registration for Hoosiers ages 18-24 and 18-19 down 11% and 54%, respectively²⁵. The latter number placed Indiana last among the 39 states and is especially alarming because research shows that voting is an habituated behavior, viz., if a citizen casts their first ballot at a young age, that behavior tends to persist for life; conversely, the percentage of new voters who cast their first ballot much later in life is quite low²⁶.

Voter registration drives are a non-partisan activity that should be ongoing in every Indiana high school. By using the Indiana Secretary of State's resources freely available on its website, such registration drives should require no expenditures beyond any nominal investment of time. There are nonpartisan, nonprofit organizations like the League of Women Voters of Indiana and the Indiana Citizen Education Foundation that could provide assistance to Indiana high schools with their voter registration efforts.

²⁴ See Owen, Diana. (2015). High School Students' Acquisition of Civic Dispositions: The Impact of We the People.

(https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279941602_High_School_Students%27_Acquisition_of_Civic_Dispositions_The_Impact_of_We_the_People)

²⁵ See Youth Voter Registration Already Above or Closing In on 2016 Election Levels
(<https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/youth-voter-registration-already-above-or-closing-2016-election-levels>)

²⁶ See Becoming a Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources, and Growth in Young Adulthood
(https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/a8cb/261dd533f80ebb229c0b0852ecf1c740ba49.pdf?_ga=2.205419795.243084069.1602874493-449654836.1602874493)

Creation of Civic Education Advocacy Coalition

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Create a sustaining group or forum focused on promoting and improving civic education.	This group/forum (administered by the Indiana Bar Foundation or other public/private partnerships) will involve policy makers and stakeholders at various levels to ensure civic education is a key component education policy, incorporating new technology and innovation throughout the state. Members of this group/forum will leverage their expertise in education policy and legislation to build and sustain the relevancy of civic education when deciding academic standards, funding and allocation of resources, and public support. This group/forum would be charged with implementing the 2020 Civic Education Task Force recommendations.	Group/forum created with the goal of informing the next Indiana social studies academic standards update and ongoing civic education policy.

This recommendation comes from a desire to maintain the importance of civic education in the forefront when considering education policy. Educators indicated on the task force survey that the time their school or district devoted to civic education was too little or the right amount, with only two responses saying too much time was spent on civic education.²⁷

This Civic Education Advocacy Coalition will be crucial to ensuring that civic education is given the same treatment and importance in Indiana's academic standards as other disciplines, such as STEM and English/language arts education. Learning all subjects is good for the entirety of the child. This Civic Education Advocacy Coalition will continue the work of the Civic Education Task Force, taking these proposed recommendations, giving them traction in policy-making decisions, and working to implement these recommendations at the state-wide level. Unlike the Task Force itself whose work is limited to the release of this report, the Civic Education Advocacy Coalition will be established with an ongoing mission to promote and advance civic education programs and policy in Indiana over the long term.

Currently, the point needs to be reinforced that civic education is necessary for students and future generations to develop 21st century competencies allowing them to actively participate in modern society. That is why this coalition is recommended to have dedicated local and national civic experts

²⁷ Appendix C: Figure 6

in best practices, pedagogy, and policy that could help to implement the recommendations from this report. It is highly important that the members or advisors of this proposed coalition should be informed with the most up-to-date information about civic education in best practices, pedagogy, and policy. This would be to ensure the decisions or recommendations to come out of the proposed coalition would be backed by the same informed process as the civic education task force. As mentioned, Indiana wishes to remain a leader in introspective and thoughtful examinations of civic health, and this coalition will help Indiana to achieve this goal and maintain that status.

Recommendations

PHASE TWO (2024-2026)

The second phase of the recommendations is planned to start in 2024. With all Phase Two recommendations, the perceived relevance, prioritization, or importance of the recommendation is not the reason for its placement in Phase Two. The recommendations in Phase Two build upon the groundwork the recommendations for Phase One would lay. All the following recommendations are important to improving the instructional methods of civic education but can be implemented in a timetable that isn't as time sensitive or would otherwise occur in an established timeline that occurs in the timing of this phase.

Standards Revision

When looking at Indiana's academic standards, the Indiana Department of Education notes:

“standards are designed to help educators, parents, students, and community members understand what students need to know and be able to do at each grade level, and within each content strand, in order to exit high school college and career ready... While the standards may be used as the basis for curriculum, the Indiana Academic Standards are not a curriculum. Curricular tools, including textbooks, are selected by the district/school and adopted through the local school board. However, a strong standards-based approach to instruction is encouraged, as most curricula will not align perfectly with the Indiana Academic Standards²⁸.”

Indiana has social studies standards²⁹ in which civic education is encapsulated. Issues and topics related to civics and government are integrated into the curriculum of social studies courses throughout elementary and middle school. Once in the high school, the various social studies disciplines are separated into their own standards. High school government/civics is one of these disciplines with explicit standards.

In order to graduate high school in Indiana you must take a minimum of 4 credits in social studies: 2 credits of U.S. History, 1 credit of U.S. Government, and 1 credit of any social studies course.³⁰ One credit equals a semester class, meaning the high school graduation requirement only requires two years of social studies. When taken together, these requirements might meet a basic level of understanding in the overall social studies discipline; however, Indiana requires only one semester of government to graduate high school. Students should have a more complete understanding of civics and know the depth and breadth of the complexities of the American government system.

Indiana Code states that the department shall revise and update academic standards for each grade level at least once every six years on a cyclical basis³¹. The latest standards revision for social studies in Indiana was released in 2020, so the Task Force anticipate this issue being revisited at the appropriate time when the standards revision cycle specifies.

²⁸ See Indiana Department of Education Social Studies Standards (<https://www.doe.in.gov/standards/social-studies>)

²⁹ See Indiana Department of Education Social Studies Standards (<https://www.doe.in.gov/standards/social-studies>)

³⁰ See Indiana High School Diploma Requirements ([https://www.in.gov/sboe/files/Current_Diploma_Requirements_\(General_and_Core_40\).pdf](https://www.in.gov/sboe/files/Current_Diploma_Requirements_(General_and_Core_40).pdf))

³¹ See IN Code § 20-31-3-3 (2019) (<https://law.justia.com/codes/indiana/2019/title-20/article-31/chapter-3/section-20-31-3-3/>)

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Craft revised State Standards with the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework³² as the basis, with the consultation of Civic learning experts and advocates.	Incorporate technology and digital civic literacy throughout the updated social studies standards in conjunction with current Digital Citizenship ³³ standards. Utilize existing digital civic education resources.	Revision of the state standards with special accommodation to revise social studies standards ‘out of turn’ in 2024 instead of waiting for next cycle.
	Civics standards should go beyond a simple focus on Government institutions and include participatory civic learning practices like current and controversial issues discussions, service learning, and simulation of democratic processes.	Revision of state social studies standards in 2026 at the next cycle.

The College, Career, and Civic life (C3) Framework³⁴, should be the basis of the updated academic standards to modernize Indiana’s civic education policies. Reevaluation of state standards for all grade levels is necessary to ensure civic education is being taught, and that begins with the C3 Framework.

The primary purpose of the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards is to provide guidance to states on the concepts, skills, and disciplinary tools necessary to prepare students for college, career, and civic life. The C3 Framework calls upon teachers to increase the rigor with which they teach social studies to build critical thinking, problem solving, and participatory skills of students to become engaged citizens³⁵. The Framework is built on four dimensions that brings the pedagogy together: (1) Developing questions and planning inquiries; (2) Applying disciplinary concepts and tools; (3) Evaluating sources and using evidence; and (4) Communicating conclusions and taking informed action. When all four dimensions are put together in the lesson, the student will learn a better depth of knowledge and content.

³² See College, Career & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards (<https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/c3/c3-framework-for-social-studies-rev0617.pdf>)

³³ See Indiana Department of Education Digital Citizenship Standards (<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/standards/cf-bmit-digitalcitizenship-01-2016-august.pdf>)

³⁴ See College, Career & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards (<https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/c3/c3-framework-for-social-studies-rev0617.pdf>)

³⁵ See Implementing the C3 Framework: What is our Task as Social Studies Leaders? (<https://www.socialstudies.org/resources/implementing-c3-framework-what-our-task-social-studies-leaders>)

The C3 Framework capitalizes on the Six Proven Practices³⁶ in civic education by supplying the elements of education suggested by the Six Proven Practices. Classroom instruction, democratic simulations, current event discussion, interactive learning, participating in the community, building school climate, and fostering civic knowledge, skills, and abilities are all common themes amongst the Six Proven Practices and the C3 Framework. This is a reminder of the holistic approach of these recommendations as well.

The C3 Framework would help address the problem of social studies being multidimensional. Through the Framework, students can learn and practice the social studies discipline in a similar fashion as they practiced in the professional world. The model has students work through history issues as if they're a historian, civics issues as if they're a political scientist, economics issues as if they're an economist, and so on. Because of this methodology, students receive a lesson more reflective of real life than any textbook can offer in just words.

The C3 Framework is specifically designed to bring inquiry into the classroom. Students can discover their learning through appropriately designed questions, informational sources, and formative assessments. It's the nature of students to use their inherent need to question things to drive their own learning. By creating academic standards that are more friendly to inquiry, instead of fact-driven knowledge points, students will build a more intrinsic desire to learn, question, explore, research, and argue. This is not to suggest that students will not be learning the historical and relevant facts which form the basis for a quality civic education. Instead, these foundational facts serve as the basis for further inquiry and discussion by the students as they advance to deeper levels of analysis. There is no substitute for deep knowledge and understanding of the socio-cultural world offered through the learning dimensions of the C3 Framework which can be used to help inform future social studies standards in Indiana.

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Increase civics course requirements at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.	Courses should incorporate the Six Proven Practices ³⁷ for effective civic learning.	Full semester standalone civics course.
	Elementary grades should have specific, dedicated time devoted to civic education.	Half-semester course utilizing the current social studies course requirement to focus on civics.
	Middle grades should have a more robust civic education requirement.	Enriching and enhancing the current civic standards to be incorporated within the existing social studies course.
	A full year high school civics course.	

³⁶ See Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning
(<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/10/48/11048.pdf>)

³⁷ See Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning
(<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/10/48/11048.pdf>)

Increasing the civics course requirement would address the concern of teachers that civic education has been marginalized as compared to other subjects like English/language arts or STEM courses. There are a wide range of possible solutions to implement this recommendation, but they are all focused around increasing the required amount of time or specific classes where civic education is being taught. This is particularly important at the elementary level where teachers are responsible for teaching all the subjects in a limited time. Due to the accountability reflected through the required testing of students and the lack of testing on civic knowledge, this critical topic often suffers in the amount of time covered in the classroom as compared to other topics. The Task Force survey data reinforces this as educators do not feel like they are able to focus on civics without the pressure of focusing on other subjects that are tested.³⁸

The Task Force survey respondents who identified as elementary teachers indicated that, on average, civic education is taught, at most, only once or twice per month and, at most, for 20 minutes at a time³⁹. Those are worrying statistics when you consider that elementary school is where the foundations of knowledge are to be laid and civics is being subordinated to other school subjects. During the first Task Force meeting in April, educators of different grade levels gave presentations about their experiences with teaching civic education. The presenter for the elementary level echoed these sentiments that there is not enough time to teach civics in an elementary school day because of the pressure to teach other subjects.

Pre-Service Teacher Content

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Increase civics/political science course requirements for pre-service teachers to obtain licensure and a degree.	Institute a widespread civic course credit hour requirement for educator licensure and graduation.	Require upwards of 12 credit hours or 4 courses. Create uniformity across universities in Indiana.

Professional development is crucial to the practicing educator. However, a strong background knowledge and understanding of the content can begin even before the teacher steps foot in their classroom.

For this reason, we recommend that the graduation requirements for teachers need to be raised regarding civic education. Currently there is not a uniform rule in Indiana colleges and universities for what teachers need to know in the field of civics before graduating and being licensed teachers. As seen from the data in the professional development section, the majority of teachers are eager and willing to teach civics and learn more about it as a discipline to become more effective educators. The survey showed that there was not a lot of agreement from educators about whether they felt they had the appropriate training⁴⁰.

³⁸ Appendix C: Figure 7
³⁹ Appendix C: Figure 8 and Figure 9
⁴⁰ Appendix C: Figure 10

The educators surveyed were not in agreement over something so crucial to teaching. As discussed earlier, elementary school is the most important time to get the foundation of your civic knowledge, yet less than one quarter of elementary school teachers agreed that they had the training to teach civics in their classrooms⁴¹. This is a problem in our educator community that our teachers don't feel that they are being trained sufficiently to teach this subject matter properly before being in an actual classroom, and do not have the opportunity to learn about effective teaching methods when they get there.

Due to the wide variety of civic education requirements for pre-service teachers at Indiana colleges, students end up with teachers with limited teaching ability in civics. In order to address this issue and the concern from teachers about their knowledge in civic education, this recommendation seeks to have Indiana colleges of education revisit their standards for pre-service teachers to make a coherent requirement for civics related courses before graduation. The current requirements are drastically varied with some schools not requiring any civics or political science courses. Educators should be arriving out of pre-service ready to teach and knowledgeable enough to teach the required subjects.

⁴¹ See Appendix C: Figure 10

Assessment and Accountability

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Indiana should ensure that authentic assessments are utilized to address the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that make up a comprehensive preparation for civic life.	Create authentic assessments ⁴² in civic learning that also provide accountability systems for school districts.	Develop a new statewide assessment or change existing assessment pursuant to the Six Proven Practices ⁴³ to ensure that civic education is properly assessed, and the results are subject to accountability. Required assessment that fulfills any or all of these: • Must be passed for graduation • Must be administered • Must be encouraged and tied to awards/certifications for schools/districts
	Incorporate authentic assessments in civics at the middle and high school level to ensure accountability.	
	Civic knowledge, skills, values and whether students receive learning opportunities that promote these outcomes should be assessed and linked to the revised Indiana civic education standards, to enable periodic reporting to the Department of Education and the public on the state of student civic learning.	

This recommendation aims to ensure that civic education is a priority in education policy and curricula and that it is assessed in a way that is authentic and prepares students for active participation in civic life. Incorporating an authentic assessment tied to civic education standards will help schools put equal priority for civic education assessment amongst other subjects already tested in one form or another. Moving toward more authentic assessments will give teachers a better understanding of the students' understanding of the content being taught and its real-world applications. The Task Force recommends the development and implementation of more authentic assessment models.

As the Task Force learned in its information-gathering meetings, authentic assessments allow for methods other than simply traditional fill-in-the-bubble, multiple choice exams⁴⁴. While “bubble exams” have a usefulness, they are somewhat limited and it is important to assess that students have an understanding of the subject matter you are teaching, otherwise there would not be much point perfecting your pedagogy without ensuring its effectiveness. Authentic assessments, rather than multiple choice memory tests, require students to develop a product, response, analysis, or problem solution that reflects the kind of reasoning or performance required beyond the classroom. The inclusion of an authentic assessment will tie success in civic education to accountability standards for

⁴² See Beth Ratway, American Institutes for Research: Authentic Assessment in Civics (<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ntfb6oqxbgdop57/IN%20Civics%20Panel%20June%202020.pptx?dl=0>)

⁴³ See Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning (<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/10/48/11048.pdf>)

⁴⁴ See Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning (<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/10/48/11048.pdf>)

schooling in the same way other disciplines are held accountable for school success. Having these “civics laboratory” type of assessments similar to science and other STEM subjects provides the critical hands on, real world, and critical thinking skills necessary to more fully teach and assess civic education curricula.

There are many excellent authentic assessment model programs that currently exist, like We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, Project Citizen, and Model UN. Civic experts, national and local, should be consulted in the creation and implementation of these authentic assessments using some of the existing models that have been shown to produce impressive results. Similarly, proper implementation is crucial to the success of this recommendation, thus professional development is a key ingredient to making this assessment transition successful. Authentic assessment can be a difficult concept to grasp at first, so having civic experts and experts in authentic assessment give the roadmap on how to successfully design and implement it in classrooms is crucial.

Civic Project Graduation Requirement

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Require that all students complete a Civics project by the completion of the 5th and 8th grades.	These projects must have strong links to the curriculum and must demonstrate effective civic learning practices as given by the <i>Civic Mission of Schools</i>⁴⁵. Civic project graduation requirement could be a component to an authentic civic assessment.	Implement Civic project requirement by the completion of the 5th or 8th or both grades. This can be done statewide or locally depending upon implementation. e.g. We the People, Mock Trial, Project citizen, authentic performance-based assessment, community service, volunteerism, service-learning.

This recommendation can be incorporated with the Democracy Schools proposal as well as with the recommendation for assessment and accountability as it is a means of addressing civic education assessment and accountability. Many of the recommendations in this report reinforce the importance of civic education in the early years of education. By creating a civic project graduation requirement for the 5th, 8th, or both grades, it would provide an early opportunity for young Hoosiers to become involved in civic affairs. For elementary students especially, the Task Force survey responses showed that the majority of elementary teachers do not have civic education simulations as part of the curriculum⁴⁶. This recommendation would help to fill the current void of civic education in the elementary curriculum. This requirement would also help teachers and administrators looking for ways to increase their curricular alignment to best practices.

⁴⁵ See *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*
<http://civicmission.s3.amazonaws.com/118/f0/5/171/1/Guardian-of-Democracyreport.pdf>

⁴⁶ Appendix C: Figure 12

Recommendation		Levels of Implementation
Link this civics project graduation requirement with the employability skills component (project-based, service-based, and work-based learning experience) of the graduation pathway requirements set for 2024.	Indicate civics learning directly within the employability skills component of the graduation pathway requirements	Civics project integration into pathway diploma graduation requirement for 2024

Another way to incorporate some of the recommendations discussed in this report is through the Indiana Department of Education's graduation pathways. The graduation pathways requirements, effective with the 2019-2020 school year, is a great way to tie in the civic project graduation requirement at the high school level. There is an employability skills section where a civic project would fit with the three options to satisfy the requirement: project-based learning; service-based learning; or work-based learning. There is a very small percentage of our educators that answered on the survey that they have either a service-learning requirement in class or for graduation⁴⁷. There is a large opportunity for this recommendation to fill that gap and to utilize a proven practice for civic education.

The graduation pathways could add a service-learning requirement for graduation at the high school level, which could be tied to civics. This focus on civics within the existing graduation pathways program would be an effective way to incorporate increased civic education opportunities into existing Indiana policy. Students overall are not having their civic knowledge tested to see if they have gained understanding and do not know what the barometer for success in civics is. This civic project could solve many problems in Indiana's current civic education climate.

⁴⁷ Appendix C: Figure 13

Conclusion

This report should act as a resource or guide to help Hoosiers improve civic learning for all students. The restoration and reinvigoration of civic education in Indiana will be a long, yet worthy process. Commitments from educators, administrators, policy makers, and other stakeholders will have to be made to uphold the desire to revamp civic education policy and practices. This will improve the civic knowledge of the citizenry and thus improve the government through active participation and a knowledgeable populace.

There is optimism about the state of civic education in Indiana in that the Task Force has identified the issues currently faced and has developed a plan for implementation of recommendations to help. Following the consultation from national and local civic education experts, these recommendations will bring innovation to civic education in Indiana. The way civic education is taught in Indiana will be improved through the implementation of programs and pedagogy based in the Six Proven Practices of civic education. The recommendations of the Civic Education Task Force should be followed to maintain Indiana's desire to stay at the forefront of thoughtful, intrinsic examinations of civic health.

As best practices and pedagogy in civic learning continue to be studied, by Indiana and other states, more research will shed light on areas to improve in civic learning. Indiana policy makers should internalize all future research on civic education and act upon its recommendations in the same way they act upon the recommendations provided in this report.

Acknowledgements

The Indiana Bar Foundation and the members of the Civic Education Task Force would like to thank the presenters and civic education experts that gave direction and counsel to the Task Force: Ted McConnell; Shawn Healy, PhD; Sonia Mathew; Jason Janczak; Brianna Croft; Lauren Cantacessi; Beth Ratway; Ryan Suskey; Greg Scheller; Emma Humphries; Molly Joll; Janet Chandler, JD; and Molly Bowman.

Without the funding and support of the Lumina Foundation, this Task Force and its subsequent report would not have been possible.

Appendix A

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Appendix B

Summary of the elements and benefits of Democracy Schools as outlined by the Robert R. McCormick Foundation:

Learning Experiences

- **Design/Teaching Strategy:** The underpinnings of schoolwide civics; the practices, skills, and dispositions that frame civic learning in the classroom and with extracurricular activities.
- **Foundational Civic Knowledge:** Learning of core civic concepts across disciplines, exploring the role and responsibilities of citizens and government
- **Discussion of Current and Controversial Issues:** Intentional discussion of emerging topics and topics of tension in our society emphasizing discourse with multiple points of view.
- **Simulations:** Opportunities for students to participate in role-playing, problem solving, interactive case studies, and online games which invoke civic learning and engagement.
- **Informed Action/Service-Learning:** Opportunities for all students, regardless of academic skill or ability, to engage in civic action by using knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs on a school, local, regional, state or broader level through preparation, action and reflection.
- **Extracurricular Activities:** Clubs and organizations foster civic learning and engagement which are representative of student needs, interests, and identities.

Organizational Culture

- **School Climate:** Schools create and maintain a positive and democratic school climate that promotes students' civic development, engagement and sense of belonging.
- **Student Voice:** Schools provide formal, informal, and regular opportunities for student voice and student decision-making that is impactful at various of the school community.
- **Vision and Leadership:** School leaders have a clear commitment to the civic mission of the school, dedicate necessary resources to sustain this vision, and ensure all students have equitable access to civic learning.
- **Teacher Hiring, Assessment, and Professional Development:** School leaders have a commitment to hiring, assessing, and developing staff that can carry out the civic mission of the school as well as attend to equity and teachers' and students' identity and lived experiences.
- **School-Community Partnerships:** School leaders and staff ensure that the school and its community are a resource for each other and that there are frequent and meaningful interactions with families and community partners.

Appendix C

Figure 1

What is your interest level in teaching civics?

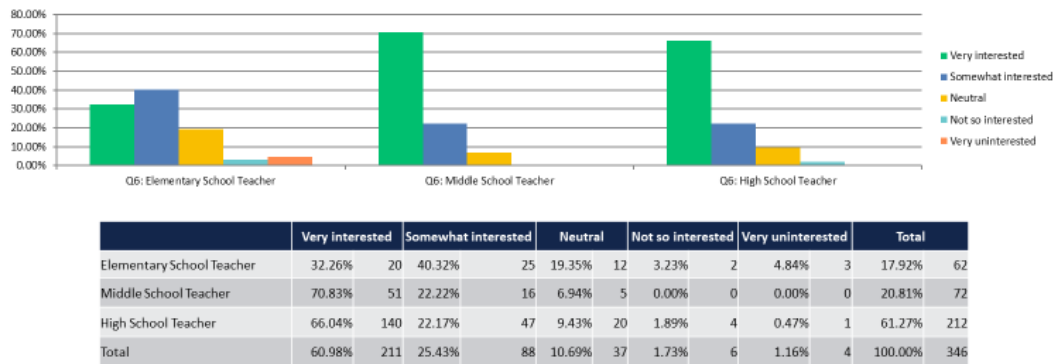
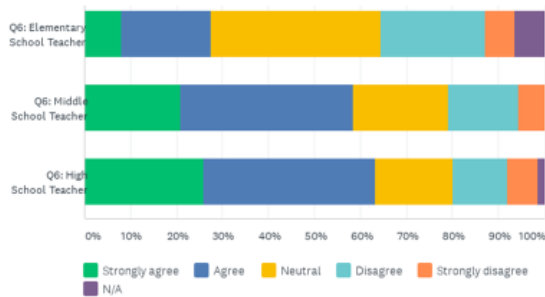


Figure 2

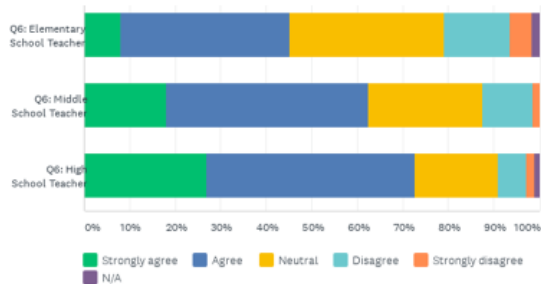
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

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I have opportunities to develop relevant skills for teaching civics from formal training



I have opportunities to develop relevant skills for teaching civics from informal learning exchanges with peers and colleagues



*All graphs based upon Likert scale weighted average.

Figure 3

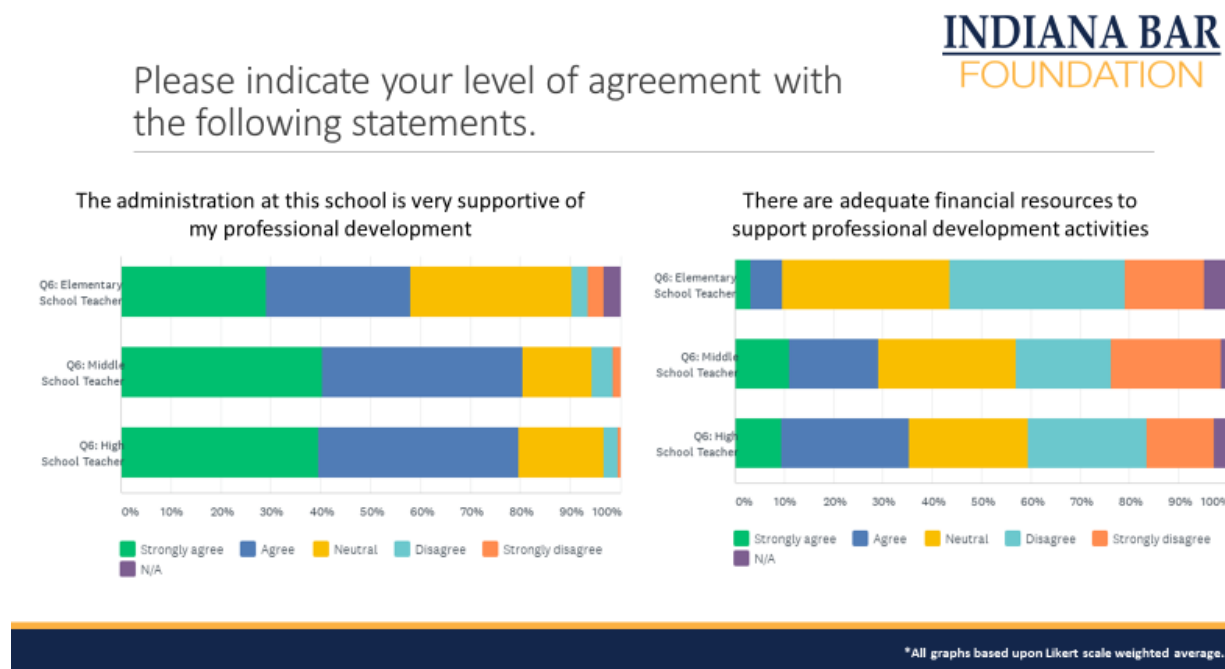


Figure 4

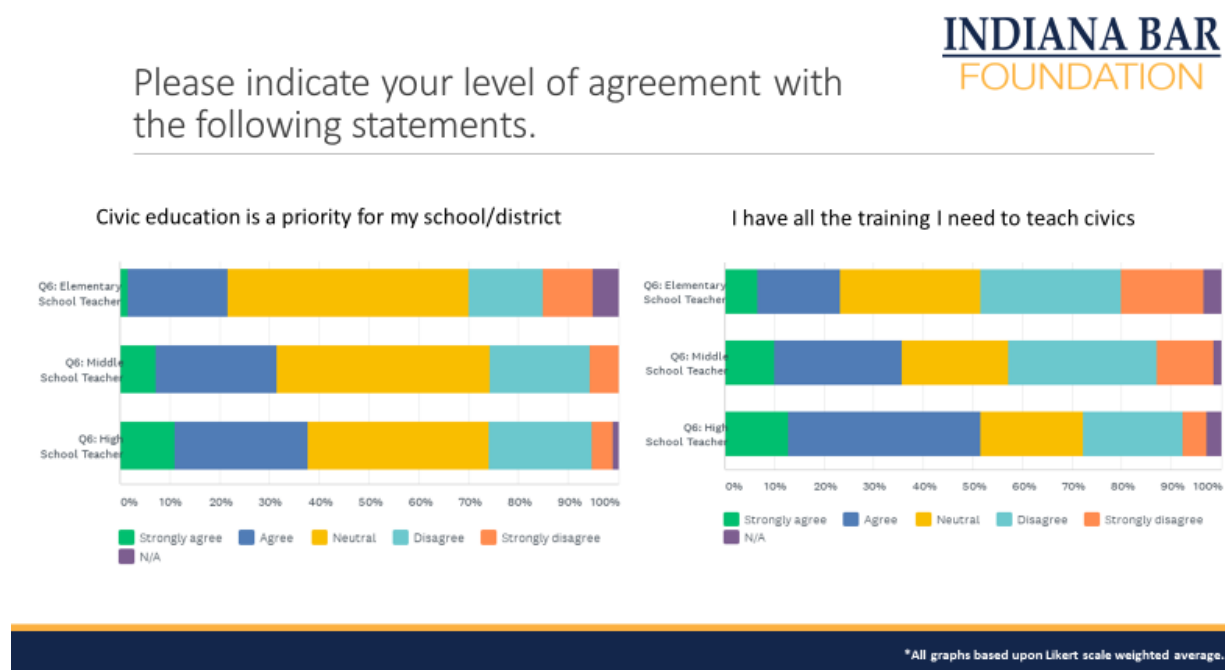


Figure 5

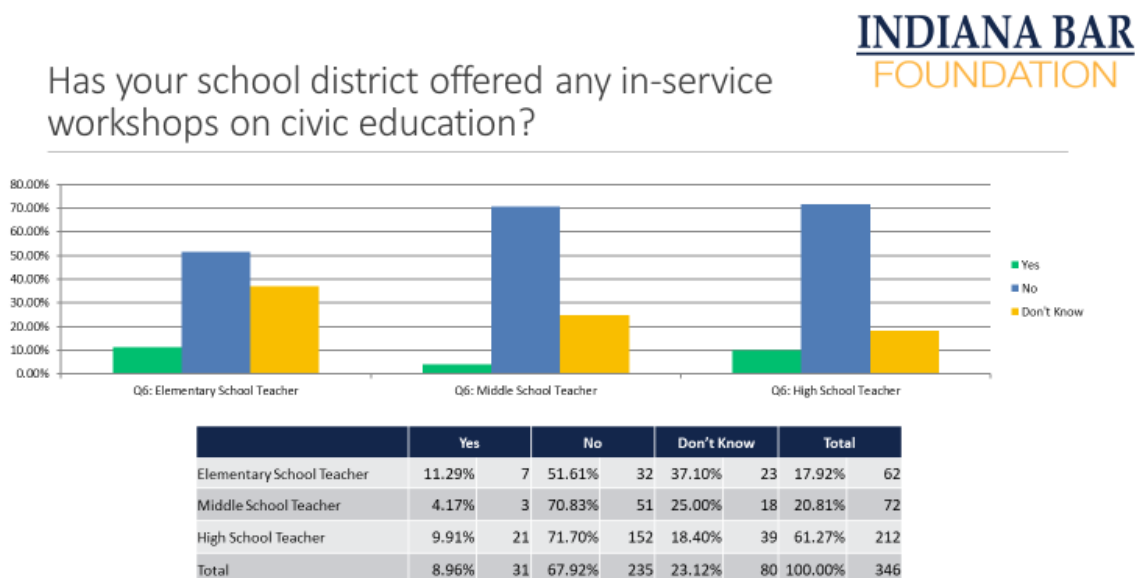


Figure 6

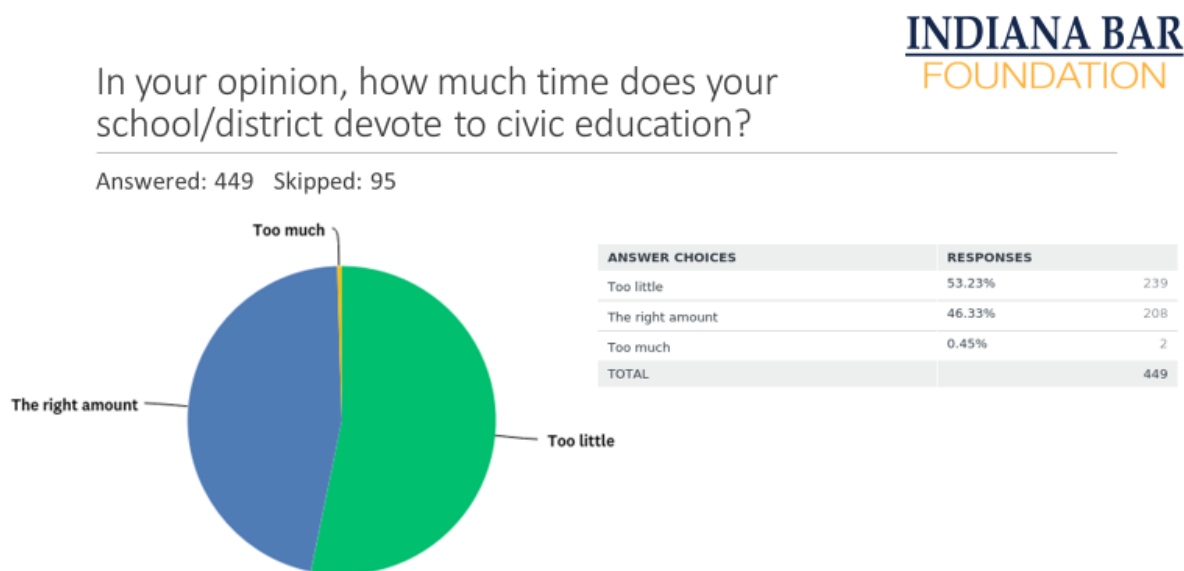


Figure 7

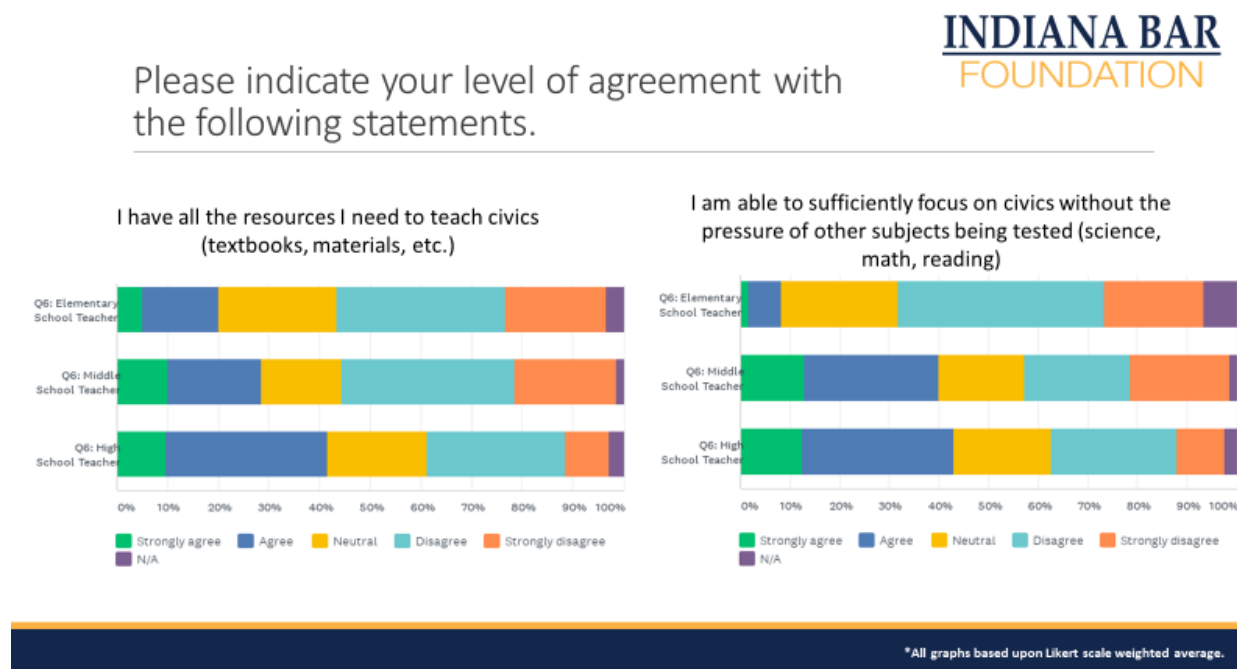


Figure 8

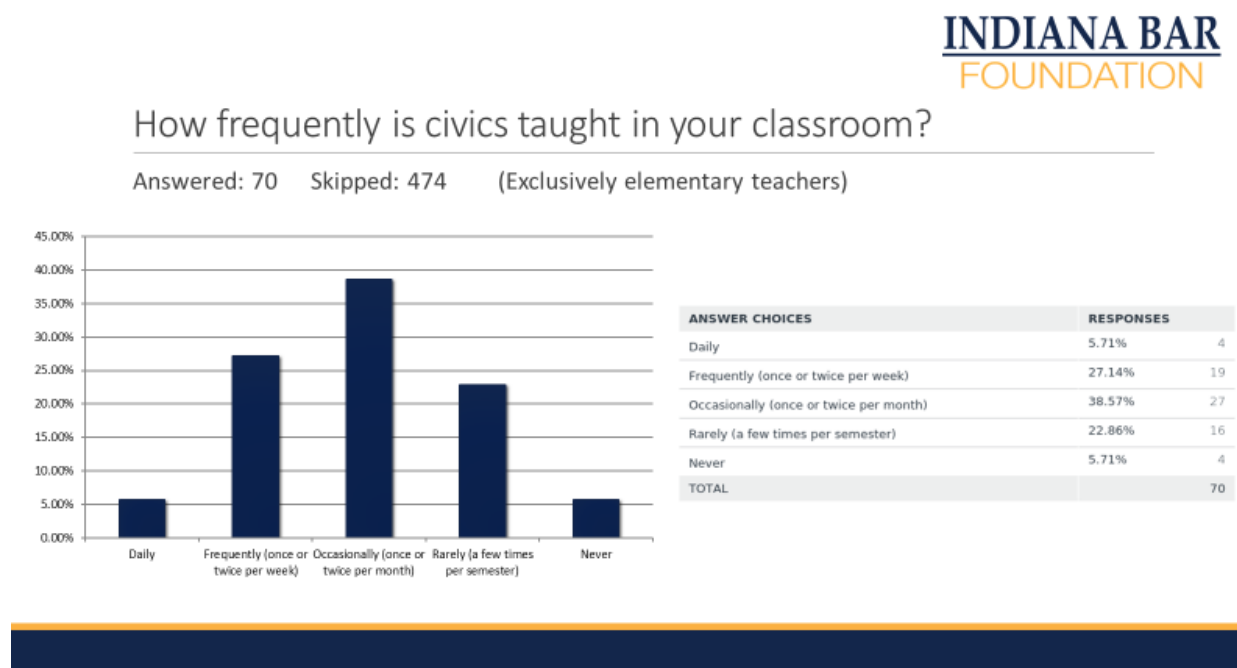


Figure 9

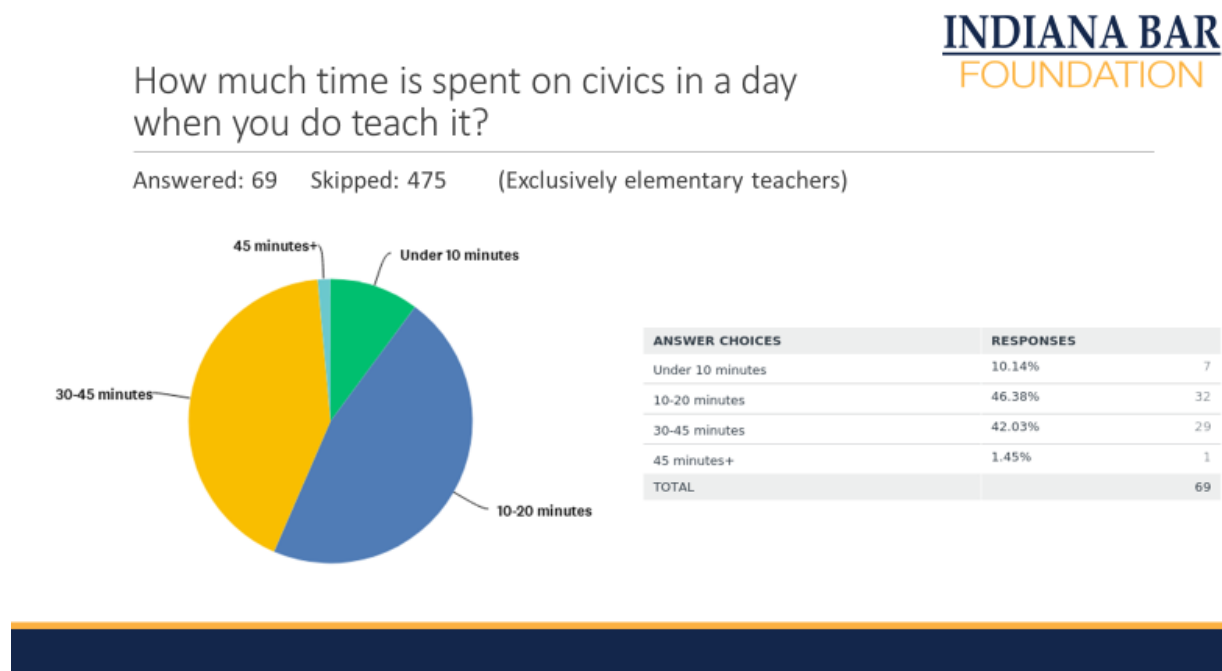


Figure 10



Figure 11

Please indicate your level of comfort with teaching civics related course content.

Answered: 464 Skipped: 80

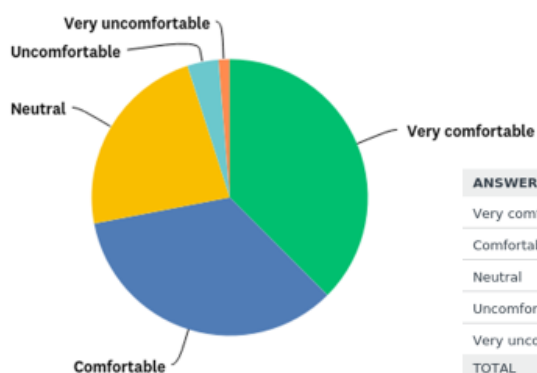
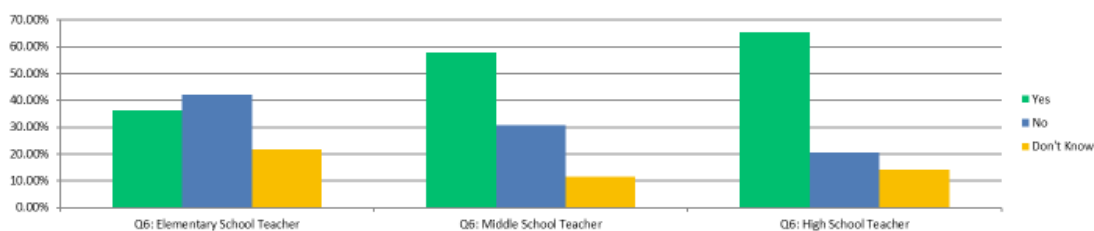


Figure 12

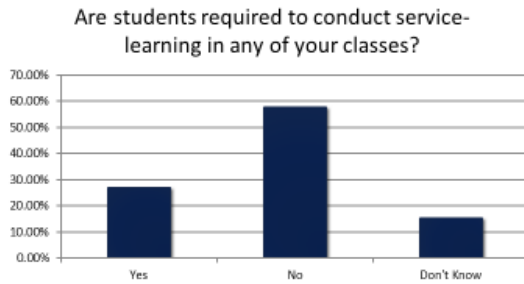
Are civic education simulations part of your social studies curriculum?



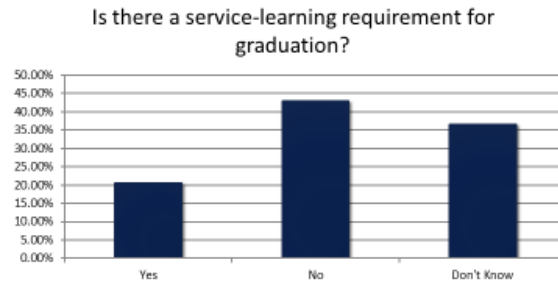
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Elementary School Teacher	36.23% 25	42.03% 29	21.74% 15	18.85% 69
Middle School Teacher	57.69% 45	30.77% 24	11.54% 9	21.31% 78
High School Teacher	65.30% 143	20.55% 45	14.16% 31	59.84% 219
Total	58.20% 213	26.78% 98	15.03% 55	100.00% 366

Figure 13

Service-Learning Requirements



Answer Choices	Responses	Total
Yes	26.90%	131
No	57.70%	281
Don't Know	15.40%	75



Answer Choices	Responses	Total
Yes	20.53%	100
No	42.92%	209
Don't Know	36.55%	178

Appendix D



Inventory of Civic Education in Indiana Schools

2020



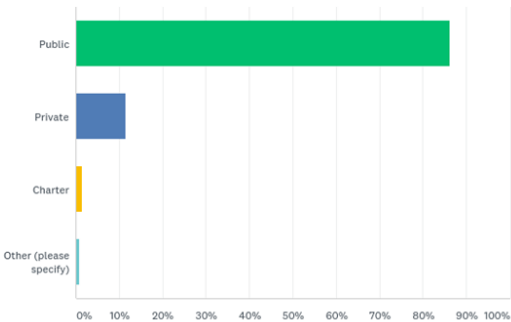
Introduction

- 544 Total Responses
- Collected May 18 - June 19, 2020
- Complete Responses: 445

Respondent Information

Type of School District

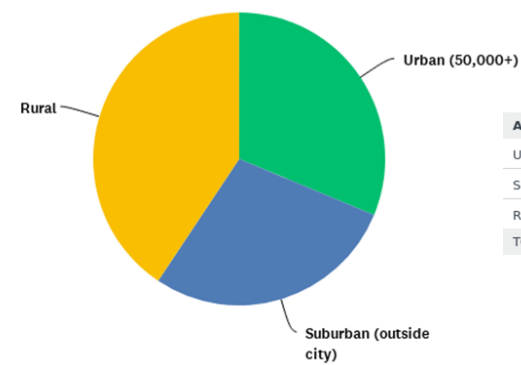
Answered: 544 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	PERCENTAGE	COUNT
Public	86.21%	469
Private	11.58%	63
Charter	1.47%	8
Other (please specify)	0.74%	4
TOTAL		544

Which best describes your school’s community?

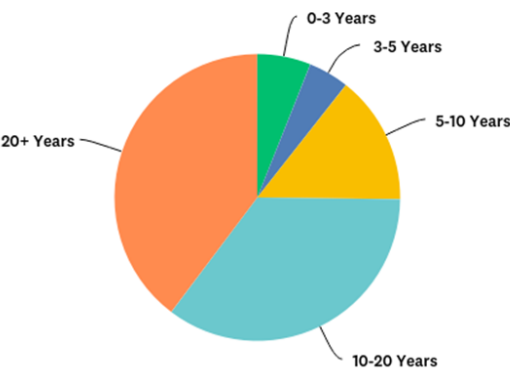
Answered: 544 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Urban (50,000+)	31.25%	170
Suburban (outside city)	28.13%	153
Rural	40.63%	221
TOTAL		544

Years in Education

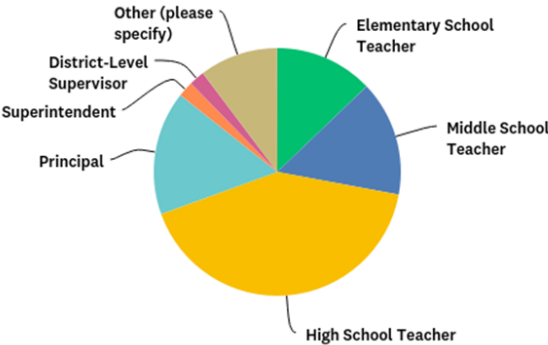
Answered: 544 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-3 Years	6.07%	33
3-5 Years	4.60%	25
5-10 Years	14.52%	79
10-20 Years	35.11%	191
20+ Years	39.71%	216
TOTAL		544

Job Title/Position

Answered: 544 Skipped: 0

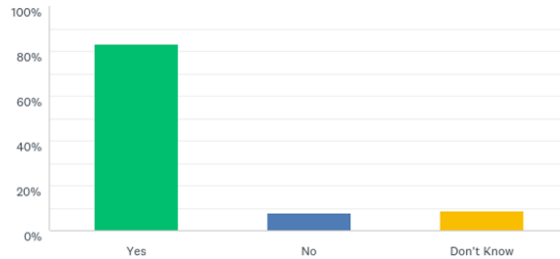


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Elementary School Teacher	12.87%	70
Middle School Teacher	15.07%	82
High School Teacher	41.54%	226
Principal	16.18%	88
Superintendent	2.02%	11
Department Chair	0.00%	0
District-Level Supervisor	2.02%	11
Other (please specify)	10.29%	56
TOTAL		544

Curriculum and Standards

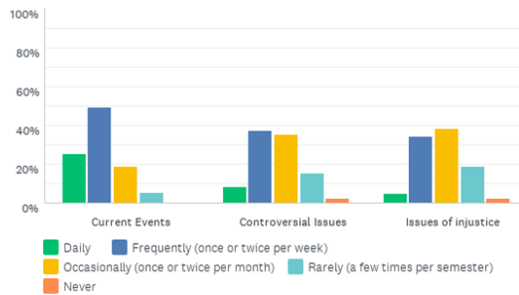
Does your district or class include teaching about current issues or current events in any course?

Answered: 518 Skipped: 26



What is the frequency of discussions on the following topics in your classes?

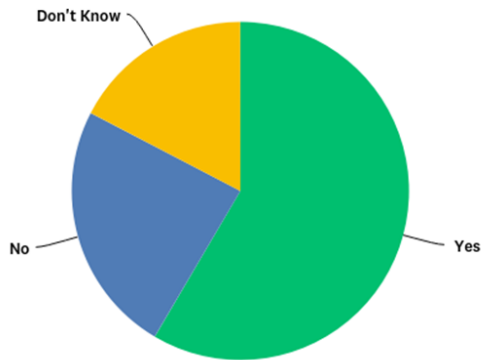
Answered: 518 Skipped: 26



	DAILY	FREQUENTLY (ONCE OR TWICE PER WEEK)	OCCASIONALLY (ONCE OR TWICE PER MONTH)	RARELY (A FEW TIMES PER SEMESTER)	NEVER	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Current Events	25.61% 125	49.39% 241	18.85% 92	5.53% 27	0.61% 3	488	3.94
Controversial Issues	8.70% 42	37.47% 181	35.61% 172	15.73% 76	2.48% 12	483	3.34
Issues of injustice	5.18% 25	34.37% 166	38.72% 187	19.05% 92	2.69% 13	483	3.20

Are civic education simulations part of your social studies curriculum?

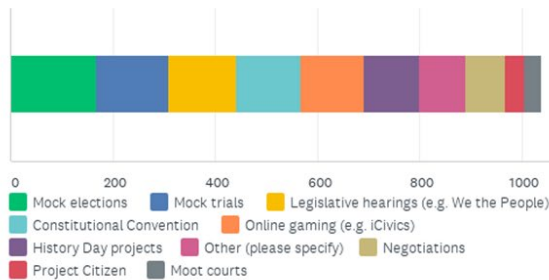
Answered: 501 Skipped: 43



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	58.48%	293
No	24.15%	121
Don't Know	17.37%	87
TOTAL		501

Which of the following simulations are part of your social studies curriculum? Check all that apply.

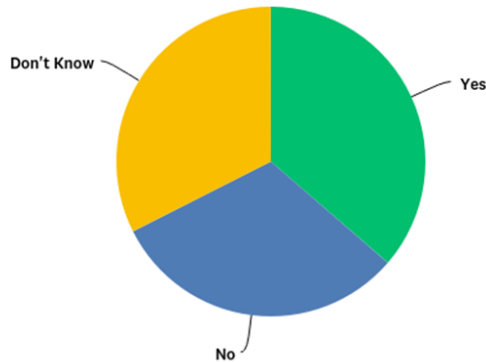
Answered: 365 Skipped: 179



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Mock elections	45.75%	167
Mock trials	39.18%	143
Legislative hearings (e.g. We the People)	36.16%	132
Constitutional Convention	34.25%	125
Online gaming (e.g. iCivics)	33.97%	124
History Day projects	29.86%	109
Other (please specify)	24.93%	91
Negotiations	20.82%	76
Project Citizen	10.68%	39
Moot courts	9.04%	33
Total Respondents: 365		

Is your school or district involved in co-curricular or extra-curricular civic education programs?

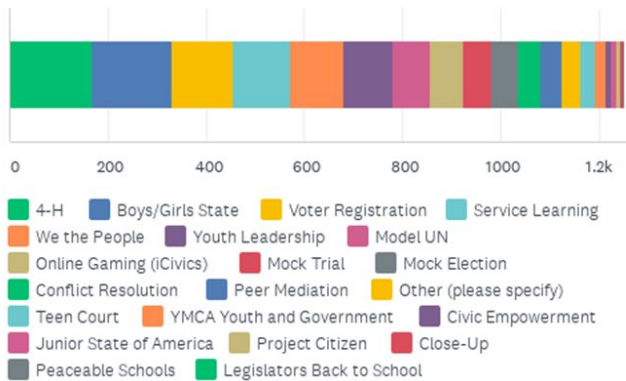
Answered: 487 Skipped: 57



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	36.34% 177
No	31.21% 152
Don't Know	32.44% 158
TOTAL	487

Is your school or district involved in any of the following? Check all that apply.

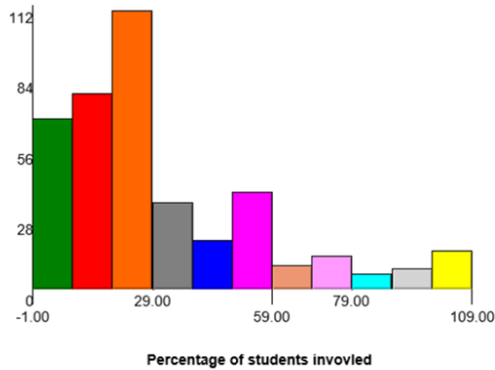
Answered: 420 Skipped: 124



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
4-H	40.24% 169
Boys/Girls State	38.81% 163
Voter Registration	29.52% 124
Service Learning	27.38% 115
We the People	25.95% 109
Youth Leadership	24.29% 102
Model UN	17.62% 74
Online Gaming (iCivics)	16.19% 68
Mock Trial	13.57% 57
Mock Election	13.10% 55
Conflict Resolution	10.71% 45
Peer Mediation	10.71% 45
Other (please specify)	8.81% 37
Teen Court	7.38% 31
YMCA Youth and Government	5.00% 21
Civic Empowerment	2.62% 11
Junior State of America	2.38% 10
Project Citizen	1.90% 8
Close-Up	1.19% 5
Peaceable Schools	0.71% 3
Legislators Back to School	0.24% 1
Total Respondents:	420

Approximately what percentage of the student body is involved in one or more of the activities?

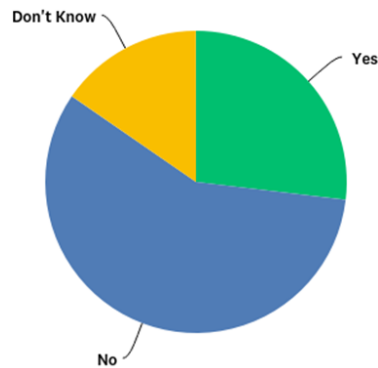
Answered: 396 Skipped: 148



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES	
	30	11,889	396	
Total Respondents: 396				
BASIC STATISTICS				
MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEDIAN	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
0.00	100.00	24.00	30.02	25.45

Are students required to conduct service-learning in any of your classes?

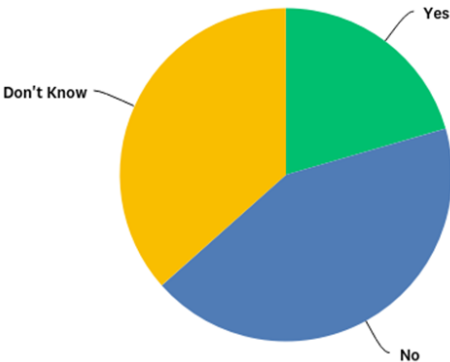
Answered: 487 Skipped: 57



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	26.90% 131
No	57.70% 281
Don't Know	15.40% 75
TOTAL	487

Is there a service-learning requirement
for graduation?

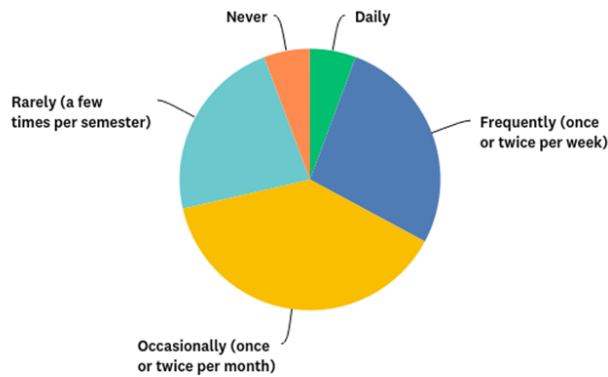
Answered: 487 Skipped: 57



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	20.53%	100
No	42.92%	209
Don't Know	36.55%	178
TOTAL		487

How frequently is civics taught in your classroom?

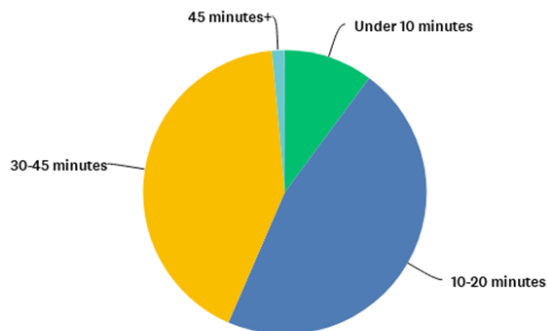
Answered: 70 Skipped: 474 (Exclusively elementary teachers)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	5.71%	4
Frequently (once or twice per week)	27.14%	19
Occasionally (once or twice per month)	38.57%	27
Rarely (a few times per semester)	22.86%	16
Never	5.71%	4
TOTAL		70

How much time is spent on civics in a day when you do teach it?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 475 (Exclusively elementary teachers)



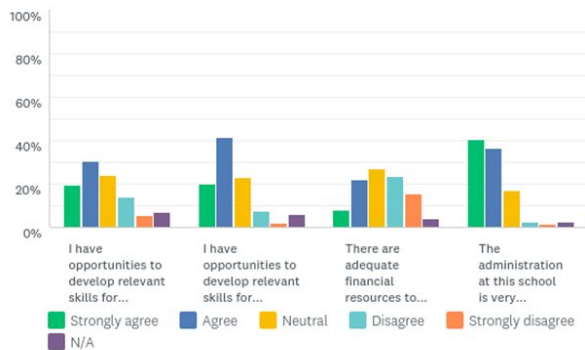
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 10 minutes	10.14%	7
10-20 minutes	46.38%	32
30-45 minutes	42.03%	29
45 minutes+	1.45%	1
TOTAL		69

INDIANA BAR FOUNDATION

Professional Development / Teacher Enthusiasm

Please indicate your level of agreement with
the following statements.

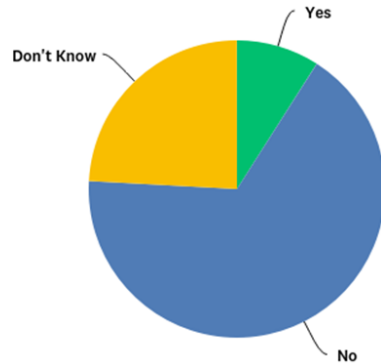
Answered: 464 Skipped: 80



	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
I have opportunities to develop relevant skills for teaching civics from formal training.	19.40% 90	30.39% 141	23.92% 111	13.79% 64	5.39% 25	7.11% 33	464	3.48
I have opportunities to develop relevant skills for teaching civics from informal learning exchanges with peers and colleagues.	19.83% 92	41.59% 193	23.06% 107	7.33% 34	1.94% 9	6.25% 29	464	3.75
There are adequate financial resources to support professional development activities.	7.76% 36	21.98% 102	27.16% 126	23.71% 110	15.30% 71	4.09% 19	464	2.82
The administration at this school is very supportive of my professional development.	40.30% 187	36.64% 170	16.81% 78	2.37% 11	1.51% 7	2.37% 11	464	4.15

Has your school district offered any in-service workshops on civic education?

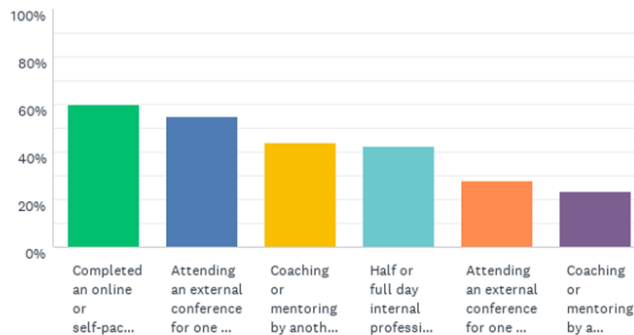
Answered: 464 Skipped: 80



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	9.05% 42
No	66.81% 310
Don't Know	24.14% 112
TOTAL	464

Indicate your participation in professional development activities, if any. Check all that apply.

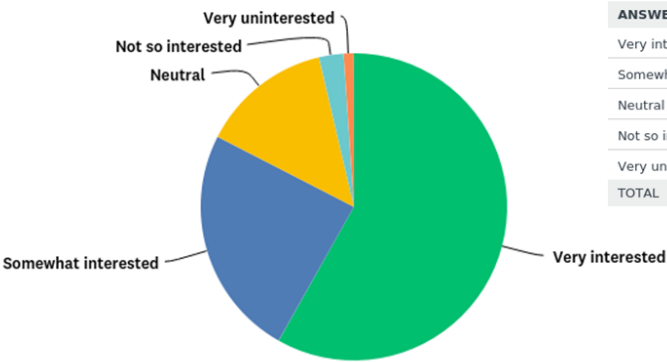
Answered: 342 Skipped: 202



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Completed an online or self-paced course or program	59.94% 205
Attending an external conference for one or multiple days focusing on teaching methodologies	54.97% 188
Coaching or mentoring by another teacher	43.86% 150
Half or full day internal professional development workshop on either civics content or teaching methodologies	42.69% 146
Attending an external conference for one or multiple days focusing on civics content	27.78% 95
Coaching or mentoring by a specialist, administrator, or expert (non-peer)	23.68% 81
Total Respondents: 342	

What is your interest level in teaching civics?

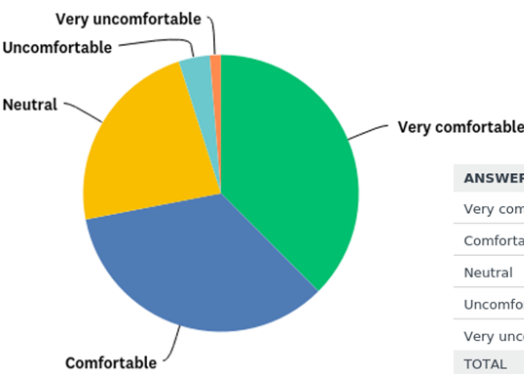
Answered: 464 Skipped: 80



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very interested	58.19%	270
Somewhat interested	24.35%	113
Neutral	13.79%	64
Not so interested	2.59%	12
Very uninterested	1.08%	5
TOTAL		464

Please indicate your level of comfort with teaching civics related course content.

Answered: 464 Skipped: 80

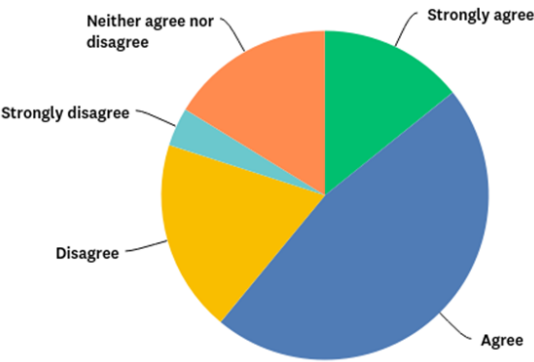


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very comfortable	37.50%	174
Comfortable	34.48%	160
Neutral	23.06%	107
Uncomfortable	3.66%	17
Very uncomfortable	1.29%	6
TOTAL		464

Opinion Piece

In your opinion, your school/district is meeting its civic mission to create informed, active, and engaged citizens.

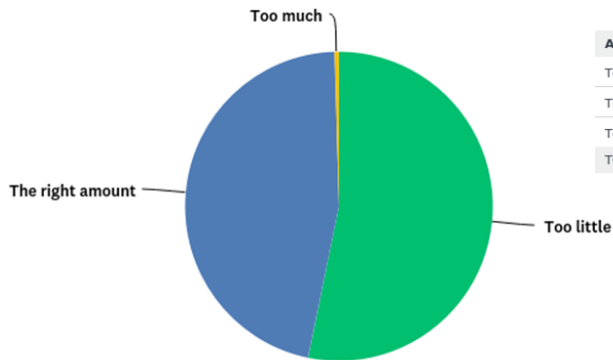
Answered: 449 Skipped: 95



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	14.25%	64
Agree	46.77%	210
Disagree	18.93%	85
Strongly disagree	3.79%	17
Neither agree nor disagree	16.26%	73
TOTAL		449

In your opinion, how much time does your school/district devote to civic education?

Answered: 449 Skipped: 95



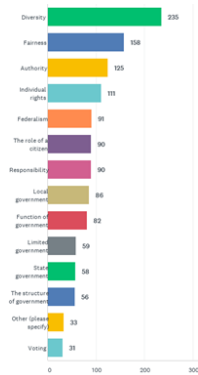
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Answered: 449 Skipped: 95

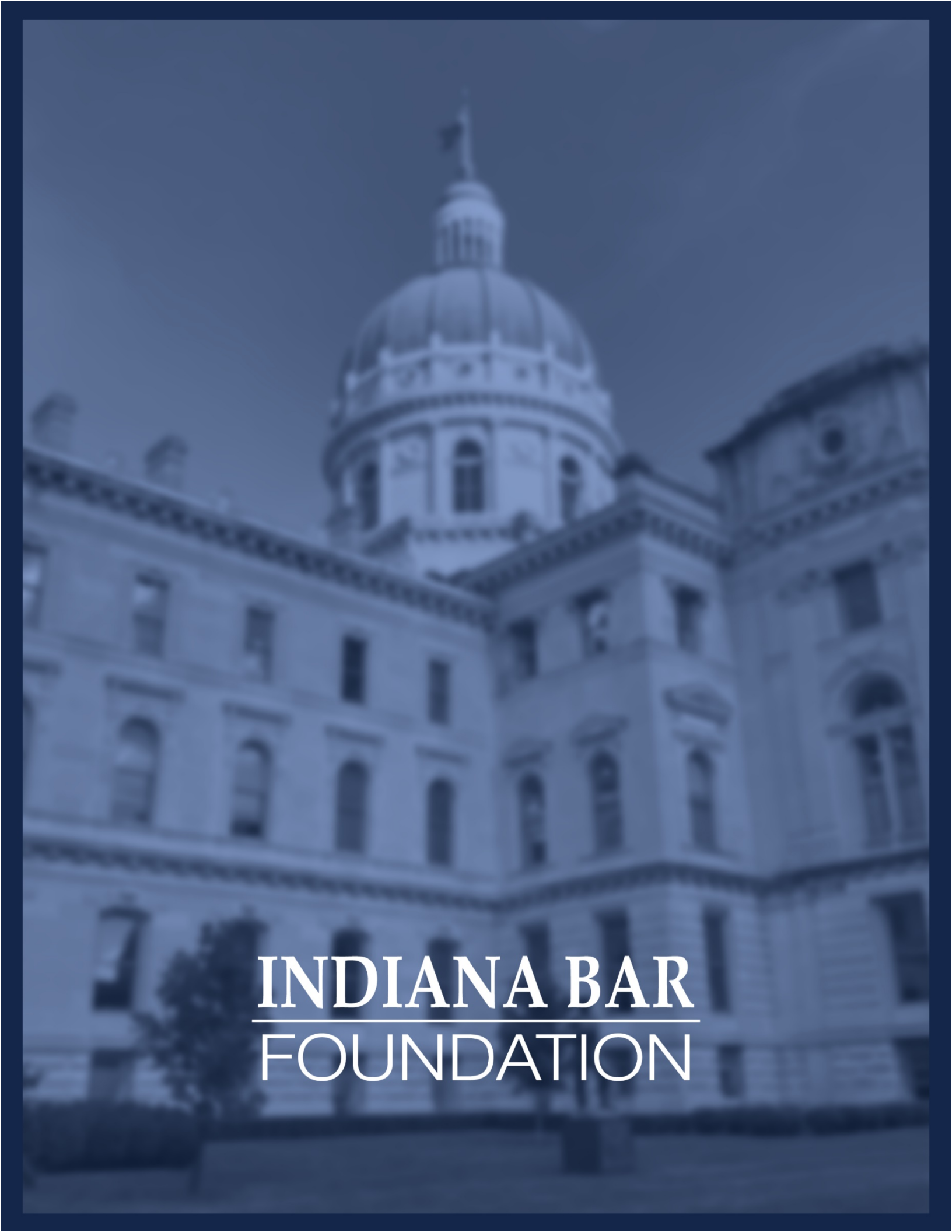


Please choose the top 3 civics topics you think are most challenging to teach.

Answered: 449 Skipped: 95



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Diversity	52.34%	235
Fairness	35.19%	158
Authority	27.84%	125
Individual rights	24.72%	111
Federalism	20.27%	91
The role of a citizen	20.04%	90
Responsibility	20.04%	90
Local government	19.15%	86
Function of government	18.26%	82
Limited government	13.14%	59
State government	12.92%	58
The structure of government	12.47%	56
Other (please specify)	7.35%	33
Voting	6.90%	31
Total Respondents: 449		

A blue-tinted photograph of the Indiana State Capitol building, featuring a large central dome and classical architectural details. The image is slightly blurred, creating a sense of depth and focus on the text overlay.

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