

***Everyone wants effective civic education,
but what is it and how do we get it?***

Civic Education in Washington State

Written by
Carol Coe

Social Studies Program

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Old Capitol Building | PO Box 47200 | Olympia, WA 98504-7200

Phone: 360-725-6351 | Cell: 360-480-2388 | Fax: 360-725-6107

E-mail: SocialStudies@k12.wa.us



***Everyone wants effective civic education,
but what is it and how do we get it?***

Our Answer in Washington State

RCW 28A.150.210—State Learning Standards

RCW 28A.230.093—Civics Requirement

RCW 28A.230.095—Social Studies Assessment
OSPI-developed classroom-based assessments

Required by Law

RCW 28A.230.093

If, after July 26, 2009, the state board of education increases the number of course credits in social studies that are required for high school graduation under RCW [28A.230.090](#), the board shall also require that at least one-half credit of that requirement be coursework in civics.

The content of the civics requirement must include, but not be limited to:

- 1. Federal, state, and local government organization and procedures;**
- 2. Rights and responsibilities of citizens addressed in the Washington state and United States Constitutions;**
- 3. Current issues addressed at each level of government; and**
- 4. Electoral issues, including elections, ballot measures, initiatives, and referenda.**

Six Proven Practices for Enhancing Civic Education

1. Provide instruction in government, history, law, and democracy
2. Discuss current local, national and international issues and events in the classroom, particularly those that young people view as important to their lives
3. Design and implement programs that provide students with opportunities to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom activities
4. Offer extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities
5. Encourage student participation in school governance
6. Encourage students' participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures

Guardian of Democracy: Successor Report to the Civic Mission of Schools
CIRCLE: The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement

Six Proven Practices for Enhancing Civic Education

1. **Classroom Instruction**
2. **Discussion of Current Events and Controversial Issues**
3. **Service Learning**
4. **Extracurricular Activities**
5. **School Governance**
6. **Simulations of Democratic Processes**

Guardian of Democracy: Successor Report to the Civic Mission of Schools
CIRCLE: The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement

Proven Practice #1

Schools should provide instruction in government, history, economics, law, and democracy.

Classroom Instruction



Tahoma High School's *We the People* Washington State Championship Team
Represents Washington State at Nationals, April 2013

iCivics

Project Citizen

We the People

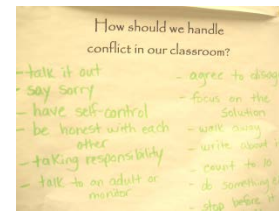
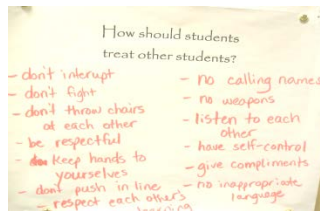
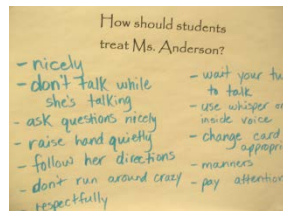
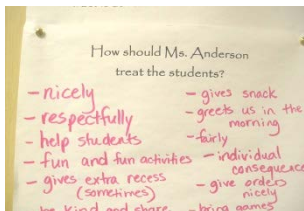
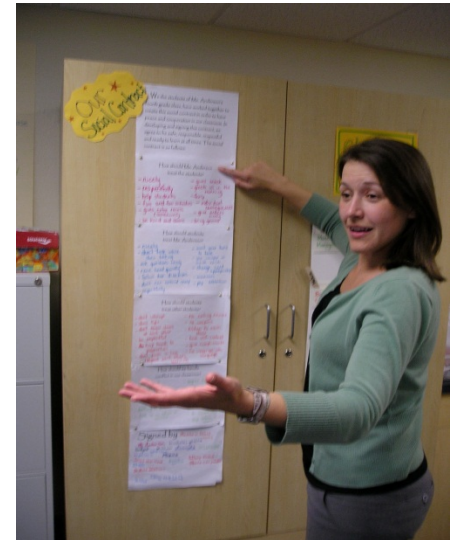
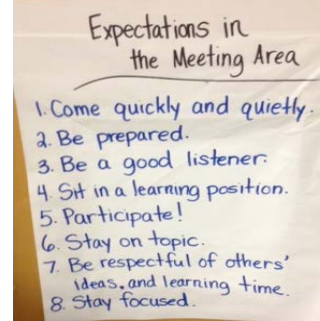
OSPI-developed Assessments:

- **You Decide**
- **Whose Rules?**
- **Constitutional Issues**
- **Checks and Balances**
- **International Relations**
- **US Foreign Policy**

Proven Practice #2

Schools should incorporate discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events into the classroom, particularly those that young people view as important to their lives.

Discussion of Current Events & Controversial Issues



Ms. Anderson wants students to discuss. She begins each year helping her students build a social contract for their classroom.

Proven Practice #3

Schools should design and implement programs that provide students with the opportunity to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction.

Service Learning

Touchet School students extend Project Citizen campaigns well beyond the classroom. They have formed a school and community Park Advisory Board to work on park beautification, planting shrubs and laying underground sprinklers. Following a data-gathering effort that included counting cars and recording other traffic-related information, Touchet students also made recommendations to the Department of Transportation on a highway relocation project in their town.



Proven Practice #4

Schools should offer opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities outside of the classroom.

Extracurricular Activities

Art (painting, photography, creative writing), **Church, Clubs** (chess, mathletes, mock trial, debate, drama, animé club, film club, skateboarding club, diversity/minority groups), **Hobbies** (rocketry, model railroads, collecting, blogging, quilting), **Media**, (local television, radio, or newspaper, yearbook staff, school newspaper, literary journal, blogging) **Military** (Junior ROTC, drill team); **Music** (chorus, band, orchestra), **Sports** (football, basketball, baseball, hockey, track, gymnastics, dance, lacrosse, swimming, soccer, skiing), **Student Government** (student council, prom committee, community youth board, Youth Traffic Court, advisory boards), **Volunteer Work** (Key Club, Habitat for Humanity, tutoring and mentoring, community fund-raising, Rotary, hospital work, candy striping, animal rescue, nursing home work, poll worker, creating hiking trails, Adopt-a-Highway)



Following a full day of training at the 2013 Youth Summit, students review their position papers before meeting with local representatives of the Washington State Legislature.

Proven Practice #5

Schools should encourage student participation in school governance.

School Governance



Raising Student Voice and Participation is a student engagement program aligned with school reform. Student council leaders plan and facilitate a series of Student Summits that engage the entire student body in dialogues. RSVP asks student what they care about, what proposals they have for community and school improvement, and what actions can be taken, in cooperation with adults, to implement their ideas for positive change.

For more information on RSVP, contact Washington Association of Student Councils (WASC) or Susan Fortin at susanf@aws.org.



Youth Ambassadors at Cleveland High School

Youth Ambassadors (YA) is a diverse community of committed and inspiring teens from middle schoolers to university students. This group of young leaders strives to connect to their communities through the power of compassion. At Cleveland High School YA has become a change agent by addressing school attendance and tardiness issues through a peer mentoring program. Youth Ambassadors worked with faculty to conduct a Data-in-a-Day (DIAD) event this year.

For more information on YA, contact Executive Director Lori Markowitz at lori@youthambassadors.net.

Proven Practice #6

Schools should encourage students to participate in simulations of democratic processes and procedures.

Simulations of Democratic Processes



Two Exemplars in Washington State

Storypath (Pictured here)

Margit Mcquire, Ph.D.,

Director of Teacher Education | College of Education | Seattle University

Email: mmcquire@seattleu.edu

Model United Nations (at Bothell High School)

Rhonda McGee

Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) for Social Studies & Technology

Northshore School District

Email: rmcgee@nsd.org

Help place the six proven practices in every school in Washington State

**If you would like to join a statewide effort to
provide powerful civic education for every student
in Washington, please contact:**

**Jerry Price, Social Studies Program Supervisor
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Phone: 360-725-6351

Email: jerry.price@k12.wa.us

