

History-Social Science Meeting Facilitator

Resources:

California Campaign PowerPoint Presentation
Campaign Prospectus
Summary of the research
Civic Education Scope and Sequence
Social Studies Team Focus Questions

At the Meeting:

Engage teachers in a discussion to begin to identify ways that the *Civic Mission of Schools* recommendations are already being implemented, and explore possible enhancements.

Four recommendations are applicable to Social Studies:

- Recommendation #1: Provide formal instruction in government, history, law and democracy;
- Recommendation #2: 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.
- Recommendation #3: Give students the opportunity to apply what they learn through community service linked to formal curriculum and classroom discussion.
- Recommendation #6: Encourage student participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures.

You might consider having teachers meet in small groups based on social studies content areas, such as Government, Economics, World and U.S History for this activity.

After the meeting:

Share the results of the discussion with the your school's campaign team and with CRF/CCE staff working with your school.

Social Studies Team Discussion Questions

The following four recommendations from the *Civic Mission of Schools* report have applications in Social Studies courses.

Recommendation 1: Provide formal instruction in government, history, law, and democracy.

According to the CMS research...

- Studying these concepts should not be seen as “rote education” but as intellectually challenging and beneficial.
- Instruction should include explicit connections between academic materials and concrete action.
- Civic education, like social studies in general, works better when it involves active discussion, debate and makes connections to current issues that affect students’ lives.

1. What are some of the ways we truly engage our students in learning?

2. How do these foster civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions in our courses? (See *Goals of Civic Education* section in Campaign prospectus.)

For example, helping students make connections between important historical documents (such as the Declaration of Independence and the U. S. Constitution) and the problems, opportunities, controversies, rights and responsibilities that matter to them in the present.

3. How might we enhance our instruction in government, history, law, and democracy to further civic capacities in our students?

Recommendation 2: 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.

What are some of the ways we incorporate current issues and events in our classes?

What materials and methods do we use that engage students in learning about and discussing things they view as important to their lives?

What could we do to enhance our program based on this recommendation?

Recommendation 3: 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.

Does anyone in our department use service learning with his or her students?

If so, how do the service experiences foster civic capacities? If not, what potential might service learning have in fostering civic capacities?

Should we consider incorporating service learning into our curriculum? If so, what opportunities might there be to link service learning with what we teach?

Recommendation 6: Encourage students' participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures.

What simulations do we use that engage students in learning about democratic processes, like voting, the judicial system, policy analysis, legislative processes, etc.?

What are the benefits in using such simulations in the classroom?

What are the challenges?

What could we do to enhance our program based on this recommendation?