

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIVIC EDUCATION AND  
STATE POLICY: AN EVALUATIVE STUDY

by

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## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to Dr. Margaret Stimmann Branson, a mentor, a colleague, a friend, and a national treasure to present and future generations of educators, scholars, students, and those who work toward a continuous renewal of a dynamic and vigorous democracy.

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### ABSTRACT

Although Civic Education is evident in most state curriculum documents, it appears to play a far less significant role in assessments, classroom instruction, and curriculum development. State policy is a critical factor in establishing and maintaining high quality curriculum implementation in any given academic subject, particularly through accountability measures; therefore, it follows that effective civic education curriculum implementation will require sufficient state policy support in standards, assessment, and implementation in order to be a viable component in education today.

This study examines the relationship between state policy that explicitly addresses civic education in Kindergarten through Grade 12 and existing curriculum delivery as measured through interviews, surveys, and student achievement data. State information was referenced for all 50 states, and specific data were examined from selected states. Although the nature of an evaluative study is such that limitations are inherent in the process, there are specific trends and generalizations that can be extracted from the interview data and document review

The findings support the need for effective state policy as the basis for building a high quality civic education curriculum and delivery system. Findings also include identification of critical conditions for effective implementation. One condition is that in which the components of standards-based civic education are implemented evenly, intentionally, and with an overall systemic plan in place. A second condition relates to the discipline itself which, by its very nature, requires skills far beyond memorization and recall. We also lack a national consensus on a standardized set of indicators on which to index student learning in civic education. From these conditions, there stem a multitude of assessment, pedagogy, and implementation issues.

Chapter 5 includes a set of recommendations that summarize the findings in a proactive, advocacy format for educational leaders, scholars, and policymakers. Through examination of the trends and patterns of civic

education policy today, this study provides a framework on which to base a definitive proposal for increased civic education attention and implementation.



## CHAPTER 1

### THE PROBLEM OF THE MARGINALIZATION OF CIVIC EDUCATION

In an ideal world, civic education would not only be taught and referenced at all grade levels in public schools, it would be a major component in all core academic classes. In history-social science classes in particular, specific civic education instruction would be based on state-adopted civic education standards and implemented with high quality civic education curriculum. State assessment systems would track student learning and progress in civic education through annual testing. Civic education would be a central theme around which language arts, math, history, science, and the visual and performing arts, could be structured in important, meaningful lessons. Schools would establish and maintain a distinct and specific mission of teaching citizenship education, the cultural heritage of a constitutional democracy, and civic understanding of the historical, philosophical, and social foundations of a pluralistic society.

High quality implementation of civic education provides a philosophical and structural framework on which to base the teaching of skills and strategies that reinforce reasoned decision-making skills, evaluation of information, practical application of civic virtue, and an in-depth understanding of citizenship responsibility. All academic disciplines benefit from the expository content of civic education material and the cognitive skill development of well-designed lessons. History classes are exceptional venues for effectively developing civic education themes through the use of primary source documents, written materials of historical and philosophical content, structured debate, multiple perspective investigations, questioning strategies for in-depth understandings, and a synthesis of cultural, social, and political issues. An effective civic education curriculum includes the study of representative democracy in relation to other historical and cultural perspectives on political systems, social developments, and government.

Civic education content can strengthen language arts skills through curricula that require students to practice expository writing with a purpose, to expand the scope of their reading to include texts of historical and philosophical significance, to participate in civil discourse of debate and oral presentations, and to develop the sensibilities of disciplined listening skills through informed discussion. Civic education can be the single most effective vehicle available to educators today who strive to encourage higher level cognitive skills through a writing program that is based on strong thesis development, supportive detail, and justification of conclusive responses to issues centered in social awareness. Science and math classes would be able to use civic topics to develop application and graphic representation of civic issues. Career education would include service learning topics that highlight civic responsibility, civic awareness, community, governance structures, social responsibility, and inclusiveness.

Civic education, as addressed through the nation's school systems today, is a topic that receives large amounts of popular support, lesser amounts of administrative support, and even smaller amounts of fiscal support for resources, instructional improvement, or systemic implementation within public schools. Civic education programs vary widely from school to school, district to district, and state-to-state. While the goals of a strong civic education program are touted in almost every school mission statement and often listed as a primary goal in school and district education plans, little effort has been made to analyze the effect of program implementation efforts in civic education within the scope of current accountability systems that have been adopted in all states.

Without the benefit of specific accountability measures aimed at civic education, it is difficult to gauge the effect of the wide variety of programs that are now in place. Civic education curriculum, as implemented in schools around the country, is based primarily on individual teacher interpretation, available resources, and administrative support, all of which are frequently inconsistent with stated goals and

missions; however, in spite of the number of intangible variables that currently drive civic education implementation efforts today, efforts to examine critical elements of state policy that address civic education and the levels of implementation in diverse classrooms have yielded important findings and implications for the future of civic education. This study will examine some of the contemporary literature, state policy documents, student assessment data, and personal accounts of civic education as it exists today. This study will examine the relationship between state policy and curriculum implementation through student achievement in civic education.

#### *Problem Statement*

Evidence of recent elections, including low voter turnout and voters' lack of knowledge of issues, underscores the importance of why we need to strengthen effective civic education in our schools. A lack of understanding, among large sectors of the general public, of the complexity and interrelationship of economic, political, and social issues confounds the democratic process and places popular sovereignty in jeopardy. The willingness of the populace to remain detached from domestic and foreign policy issues can only be detrimental for the national and global outlook of today and into the future. Worse still, we regularly see public opinion that is based on incomplete or inaccurate information. Citizens frequently lack the analytical skills on which to evaluate sources of information. Civic education is one small but critical step toward promoting good decision-making skills and civic engagement as we work toward better understanding of global issues, war and peace, economic stability, and international justice.

To be sure, civic education has enjoyed a recent upsurge in interest and has been recognized as a fresh opportunity to engage students in real life decision-making.<sup>1</sup> New programs and curricula in civic education

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have made it easier to implement intentional instruction in delivering high quality civic education. Civic education often provides opportunities for students to improve their perceptions of self-efficacy as they work on projects that influence and determine public policy in such areas as the environment, community development, economics, historical preservation, and cultural heritage. Students may also participate in structured debates affording students the opportunity to examine multiple perspectives, evidence, logical arguments, and differentiation between fact and opinion. In all cases, students will gain awareness of the constructs and principles on which participatory democracy is based.

Civic education, or citizenship education,<sup>2</sup> underscores the need for maintaining and developing the skills, knowledge, and dispositions of our young people as they become informed, concerned, citizens with a sense of self-efficacy in democratic governance. This focus on student engagement and the responsibilities of citizenship is reflected in some of the civic education curriculum and professional literature that has been developed in recent years.

Organizations such as the Center for Civic Education and the Constitutional Rights Foundation have produced well-researched and sound curriculum resources that support direct instruction in civic education. In addition, there has been a proliferation of organizations, committees, and agencies formed over the last decade for the purpose of advocating, promoting,

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<sup>1</sup> The Civic Mission of Schools is a recent initiative that has received national and state attention on the need to promote and re-establish civic education as a high priority in public schools. Civic education is viewed as the primary foundation on which to build and maintain a viable democratic society through specific instruction.

<sup>2</sup> "Civic education" and "citizenship education" are terms that are often used interchangeably. "Citizenship education" implies reference to the participatory aspect of civic education while "civic education" appears to be used as a more inclusive term that suggests a broader scope in student understanding of the historical, philosophical, and political science foundations of civic education. Some state and national organizations use the term, "citizenship education."

and implementing civic knowledge, higher order civic intellectual skills, application of skills, and development of positive civic dispositions.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of the attention centered on civic education, evidence of actual development and implementation of these important skills and knowledge remain sporadic and infrequent at the classroom level. Recent trends in public education include the adoption of state standards in academic subjects and the implementation of accountability measures through state testing. Academic standards and state assessment systems have had a major impact on curriculum, classroom instruction, and student learning objectives. For the most part, accountability measures have centered on quantifiable data from standardized tests and the majority of assessments are in the areas of reading and mathematics. In many state standards, civic education is often found to be a somewhat inconsequential subsection of the History-Social Science curriculum.

State policy on educational practice is notoriously responsive to short-term needs with little attention paid to the long-term and systemic process of continuous improvement. The political responses to demands that emanate from a public agenda of increased accountability leave little room for systematic review and response. This short-term perspective does not take into consideration long-term planning, allowance for adjustments, or feedback into the system on the successes and failures of educational initiatives. On a positive side, this public demand for more accountability has required states to become more sensitive to the need for raising academic expectations, articulation of specific content standards, and implementation of

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<sup>3</sup> Civic and citizenship education curricula have been developed by a variety of civics and related programs such as the Center for Civic Education, the Constitutional Rights Foundation, the Close Up Foundation, the Street Law program, First Vote, Kids Voting USA, Character Counts, Model U. N., First Amendment Schools, the League of Women Voters, and many others. In addition, the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools has attained national, state, and local audiences that seek to promote civic education as a primary purpose of public schools.

broad accountability in student learning. Changes have been rapid and extensive as many states have exercised this new-found strength for state-directed curriculum implementation through high stakes accountability systems. Unfortunately, there has not been a corresponding demand for quality of curriculum in the areas of citizenship, life skills, or critical thinking skills.

In spite of the shortcomings in applied life-skills and citizenship education today, the current movement for educational reform in academic subjects has redesigned educational delivery systems in classrooms across the country resulting in the largest overhaul of education in decades. Awareness of the importance of sound curriculum resources and effective classroom instruction has increased at all levels. In general, public policy at the state level has been responsible for the reform efforts that have reshaped classroom content, instruction, and assessment.

Public policy has been found to be the key to systemic reform through the adoption of state standards, state assessments, and increased specificity in high school graduation requirements. In the rush to expand and develop accountability systems in virtually every state in the nation, the attention on reading and mathematics has focused on quantifiable data by which the public can readily attain scores and comparable numbers. Scarce resources (i.e., time, funding, professional development opportunities, and materials) have been allocated to raising scores and improving reading and math instruction. Evidence of a lack of accountability and disproportional resource allocation has contributed to the marginalization of civic education and history-social science in schools across the country.<sup>4</sup> Although the changes in academic content

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<sup>4</sup> There is a proliferation of articles, campaigns, and position papers that decry the need for increased attention to History-Social Science instruction through public policy, assessment systems, funding, professional development, and accountability. Instructional time that typically would be divided among the core academic subjects of math, science, English-language arts, and history has been usurped by the larger proportion of time allocated to reading and math instruction. The CIRCLE Report from the Center

have been impressive, it has become increasingly obvious that the lack of attention to applied skills curriculum, and in particular, civic education, has been an oversight that will yield serious consequences for our students, our culture, and our future.

The problem looms large in that civic education, as determined by state policy, remains under-emphasized in classrooms of all grade levels due, at least in part, to random and substandard implementation oversight. There has been a lack of systematic development, articulation, and programmatic standardization of civic education based on effective practices and documented student learning that has reached the classroom teacher. With very few exceptions, civic education remains a footnote in History-Social Science standards and curriculum. According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (*CIRCLE Report*) sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation of New York (2003), this is "an important time for schools to focus on civic education" (Carnegie Corporation, 2003, p. 5). The report outlines several reasons why it is appropriate to increase our attention to civic education issues including the rationale that "Schools can capitalize on several positive trends related to youth civic engagement" (p. 5), in spite of the reality that "school-based civic education is in decline" (p. 5). Most states, including California, require only one semester of government/civics and that class is typically not taken by students until their final year of high school. The *CIRCLE* report recommends that "Schools should work with state education departments and local school district officials to develop and establish civic education curricula based on . . . promising approaches [as outlined in the report]" and that "Standards should be implemented for civic education" (Carnegie Corporation, 2003, p. 7).

The notion that civic education needs to be not only strengthened but be positioned as the organizing

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for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement has strengthened the case for attention to civic education through identification of best practices and recommendations (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement & Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2003).

force throughout our public education system is not a novel idea. Civic education has been advocated and supported by such illustrious thinkers as Thomas Jefferson, John Dewey, John F. Kennedy, Freeman R. Butts, John J. Patrick, Margaret Stimmann Branson, Diane Ravitch, and Judith Torney-Purta. "To exclude civic education as a 'core' subject is to make a serious mistake. It is to assume that somehow students will learn how to fulfill the role of citizens in a democracy from sources other than schools. Research, as well as human experience, contradicts that false assumption" (Branson, 2004b). Citizenship education has always been a critical element in the development of participatory democracy. It is unclear why, with such support and demonstrated need for increased civic education, we are seeing such a gap between what should be and what is.

Civic Education has been the subject of an outpouring of advocacy and well developed support through articles, books, curriculum supplements, organizations, and programs. In spite of numerous broad-based campaigns to increase the implementation of civic education, there has not necessarily been a corresponding level of support from policymakers through state policy. In many cases, policy support appears to be more of a more symbolic nature such as in the form of resolutions or position statements rather than as part of an infra-structure that would actualize civic education in classroom practice.

This divergence between rationale and practice is emphasized in the research and evaluation report of the Policy Research Project on Civic Education Policies and Practices in which it is reported that "Students often do not have the civic knowledge, the higher-order civic intellectual skills, and the civic dispositions necessary to connect civics facts and concepts to the responsibilities of citizenship. Although many state policymakers and educators give lip service to the importance of civic education in the schools on a regular basis, in reality state policies and school practices often fail to provide students with the civic education they deserve" (Tolo & Policy Research Project on Civic Education Policies and Practices, 1999).



There are many examples of the potential strength of civic education curriculum in the nation's educational system today. Many recent publications and expansions of civic education curriculum along with the supporting research on skill development have improved the outlook for curriculum inclusiveness and a small number of outstanding teachers and administrators have taken to heart the message.<sup>5</sup> Civic education is widely recognized as having enormous potential to develop intellectual skills such as analysis, evaluation, synthesis, multiple perspectives, and in-depth understanding of political, social, and economic issues. Recent political events and the attention to world-wide issues have opened the door to increased focus on citizenship, rights and responsibilities, comparative governments, the role of religion, foreign and domestic policy, global responsibility, and the need for understanding from multiple cultural and economic perspectives. Service learning, with a civic mission focus, has become a mainstay in many school programs.

There is a proliferation of written commentary on the rationales and justifications of why we need to promote increased citizenship education in the classroom but there appears to be an endemic gap between the recognized need for increased curriculum implementation and the systemic support required for broad-based implementation. This study, a qualitative examination of state policy, implementation, and student achievement levels addresses the need to analyze the issues underlying the gap between policy and implementation in civic education.

### *Research Questions and Methodology*

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<sup>5</sup> Curriculum resources developed by the Center for Civic Education and the Constitutional Rights Foundation have emphasized active student involvement in public policy development, mock trials and congressional hearings, analysis of historical documents, and discussion of current events. Research on the effectiveness of this curricula is available from the Center for Civic Education at [www.civiced.org](http://www.civiced.org) or from the Constitutional Rights Foundation at [www.crf-usa.org](http://www.crf-usa.org)

The goal of this qualitative research project is to identify effective state policy that supports high quality civic education implementation through evaluation of documents, processes, and student achievement levels. The research will center on the following main questions:

1. How does the strength of state policy affect student achievement in civic education?
2. How does state policy influence the implementation of high quality civic education?
3. Are there state policies that effectively support higher quality civic education implementation?

This study proposes to examine the extent of state policy concerning citizenship education through three venues, the review of state documents (state standards, frameworks, assessments, and statutes), interviews with state and national curriculum specialists, and examination of student assessment data. Some teacher survey information will also be available. Student achievement levels will be measured through examination of assessment data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), state testing data, and interviews with state curriculum specialists. Implementation levels will be ascertained through interview data and surveys.

To this end, I have examined the state policies of selected states including California, Delaware, Idaho, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania. Interviews were conducted with state civic education specialists in California, Idaho, Maryland, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania. Student achievement data was collected from state assessments in civic education, as well as examination of data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2001). A particular focus on California provides case study reference information. Comparison information from all 50 states has been referenced. The abbreviated case study provides an in-depth examination and comparison of the requirements of state policy to levels of implementation. High quality civic education has been defined and the quality of the instruction was measured as part of the implementation analysis. Other

constructs to be defined in the dissertation include civic education, State policy, quality indicators of state policy, quality indicators of civic education, criteria for implementation levels, and quality indicators of civic education curriculum resources.

In order to quantify the correlation of the gaps between policy and student achievement levels, this study will index policy levels, student achievement levels, and implementation levels. To examine performance indicators of strong civic education on a state level, an index to measure the extent of state policy is presented in Appendix A. Civic education policy is measured through state standards, state assessments, state requirements, state statutes, and other state documents. The scale to determine the extent of state policy will measure implementation levels based on state curriculum requirements from level one (no requirements or standards) to Level 5 (requirements and standards at all grade levels) as outlined in Appendix A.

Student achievement levels are indexed to state testing data in Appendix B. Student achievement levels are indicated by State assessment scores, when available, and reflect the NAEP categories of below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) measures regional scores in the United States, but does not have specific information on each state. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) Civic Education study (Torney-Purta, 2004) provides national information.

Implementation levels, as determined through survey and interview data, are indexed in Appendix C. Indicators that represent high quality civic education instruction and quality indicators for civic education resources will be found in Appendix D and those will be used to qualify the indexing of implementation levels.

### *Issues and Context*

A qualitative study of this nature requires acknowledgement and examination of some of the critical issues and mitigating factors that influence curriculum

implementation levels. Although state policy is the focus of this study, there are varying degrees of contextual influences that affect implementation and student achievement levels. Some of these issues include teacher motivation, classroom delivery systems, systems that are personality-driven, and resource allocations.

Although curriculum delivery is a major consideration due to the large margins of variability from classroom to classroom so, too, is the issue of motivation on the part of the teacher to infuse high quality civic education instruction in the curriculum. The delivery and the disposition of the educator is so critical to student learning that we can disregard the effect of exceptionally sound materials and well developed curriculum if the instructor is ineffective (Marzano, 2003).

The effectiveness of the civic education delivery system is based on other contextual factors as well. State policy issues that affect civic education implementation include the strength of state accountability systems, public support of civic education, traditional practices, and existing programs. District issues include administrative support, fiscal resources, and professional development support for teachers. Curriculum implementation at the classroom level includes issues of time, curriculum resources, and perceptions of support from district administration and governing bodies. The skill and knowledge level of teachers, as well as teacher motivation and other contextual factors, will be examined through research data based on inter-views and national surveys of teachers as collected by the Center for Civic Education.

Quantitative indicators in this study include the scope of state standards that specifically address civic education, the number of assessments (at various grade levels) in civic education, the number or frequency of state documents that support civic education, and student achievement levels on state assessments and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Qualitative indicators for analysis of the state policy include the depth and extent of civic education curriculum components in student learning as specified

in the state standards, the strength of the state directives for civic education, and the skills and concepts measured in the state assessments. Curriculum implementation levels and the quality of the curriculum are measured through an analysis of student achievement data, interviews with teachers and administrators, and examination of the curriculum materials. Interview topics with state history-social science specialists, civic education specialists, and teacher-leaders in civic education focus on qualitative topic analyses of topics such as depth of curriculum, effectiveness of state accountability systems, teacher motivation and incentive systems, system coherence, and student learning outcomes (Appendix E).

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) and the Center for Civic Education have compiled information on civic education in all 50 states (Education Commission of the States, 2003a). Information is available on assessments, standards, graduation requirements, state statutes, teacher certification requirements, and other details that pertain to levels of implementation. Although the information is well organized into table formats, there is a great deal of data to analyze and evaluate as to the relationships between the state policy (i.e., standards, assessments, graduation requirements) and implementation levels (i.e., student achievement measurements, interview data). This study examines the extent of state policy that affects civic education implementation through required classes and curriculum, the existence of state standards that directly address civic education, the quality and quantity of supporting documents for civic education on a state level, and the strength of state assessments in civic education. Gaps in the delivery system are determined from actual implementation levels vis-à-vis that which is required by state policy.

This study used the data collected from the Education Commission of the States and the Center for Civic Education for initial screening of the states to be selected for in-depth case study comparisons. Of the states chosen for comparison with the state of California, extensive interviews have been conducted with the state History-Social Science Specialists and

civic education leaders in seven other states. Documents that have been reviewed include the state standards, state publications in civic education or history-social science, state assessment resources and sample questions, state adopted or required curriculum, and state assessment data on student achievement. Other data has been collected through interviews with teachers and administrators, representatives from state Departments of Education, and national curriculum specialists in Civic Education.

### *Purpose and Significance*

The opportunity to draw attention to the need for citizenship education has never been better. Global events and international political issues are dramatic backdrops to the rising demand for rational and well-developed public policy on both the international and the domestic fronts. State policy analysis skills are critical to the high number of new legislators that form the majority of our policymakers.<sup>6</sup> Judging from the impressive numbers of new authors and literature that advocate for a well articulated and developed civic education curriculum, it is evident that civic education has enjoyed a renaissance of attention, and even some urgency, through an increasing awareness of the need for high quality civic education in all classrooms, at all grade levels. The primary threat to maintaining the momentum of increased attention lies in the competing curricula of state assessments that have garnered strong state support and have distracted even the most conscientious teachers to place low priorities on citizenship education and activities within the classroom. This study attempts to address the issue through examination of how the goals of civic education might be strengthened through better implementation policies. This examination of how State policy correlates to implementation levels may hold a key to how curriculum

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<sup>6</sup> The phenomenon of the large numbers of new legislators is due, in part, to the adoption of term limits in many states.

priorities are set at state, county, and local district levels.

The effect of this study intends to identify and promote effective state policy that supports high quality civic education implementation; to address the issue of how the goals of civic education might be strengthened through better implementation policies from a state level; to provide the framework on which to base a definitive proposal for increased civic education attention and implementation; and most important of all, to draw attention to a critical curriculum that needs to be strengthened at all levels.

The primary purpose of this study remains to examine the relationship between state policy that explicitly addresses civic education curriculum and instruction in Kindergarten through Grade 12 and student achievement levels in civic knowledge, cognitive and participatory skills, and attitudes or dispositions. To this end, this study will identify effective state policy that supports high quality civic education implementation. The data provide the framework from which it will be possible to evaluate the barriers and issues that pose a challenge to effectively implementing high quality civic education curricula.

This study supports the development of a framework on which to base a definitive proposal for increased civic education attention and implementation. Through the analysis, I intend to establish the need for strong support of civic education and the development of recommendations in effective state policy, implementation guidelines, and increased student achievement levels. Most of all, I hope this study will draw attention to a critical curriculum that needs to be strengthened at all levels.

## CHAPTER 2

### A LITERATURE REVIEW OF CIVIC EDUCATION

An extensive array of literature, documentation, and research has been amassed over recent years in civic education. National, international, state, and local educational agencies and programs have taken a greater interest in civic or citizenship education, student engagement in civic responsibilities, democratic foundations, participatory and cognitive skills development, and the development of dispositions or attitudes of self-efficacy in society. A review of this literature will provide reference points from which one may better appraise best practices and effective strategies.

#### *Structuring an Evaluative Study on Civic Education and State Policy*

Research literature is abundant in both quantitative and qualitative methods. In *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, John W. Cresswell (2003) outlines the research design process for the types of studies. The process that he has outlined is straightforward and clearly defined and has been adopted for this study as gathering data and information, organizing and preparing data for analysis, codifying the data, describing the data as through identification of trends or patterns, preparing the narrative, and interpretation of the data or information.

Appropriate application of qualitative methodology is outlined in *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* by Michael Quinn Patton (2002). Patton has compiled an extensive body of research styles and methodology for the qualitative researcher and has catalogued processes by which evaluative studies might be conducted. Through his discussion of methodology, he has examples and descriptions of types of inquiry that are conducive to qualitative research. Using chapter 4, "Particularly Appropriate Qualitative Applications" as a guide, the following conditions and characteristics of this study lend themselves well to qualitative inquiry:



individualized outcomes, program processes are non-standardized, contextual issues are critical variables and vary widely, evaluation of data requires multiple interactions for explanations and clarifications, democratic dialogue and deliberation is valued and a part of the research process, immeasurable outcomes, the analysis requires an in-depth description, and the focus of the study is on quality (Patton, 2002).

Jane Ritchie and Liz Spencer (2002) have provided a very appropriate and useful framework by which to analyze the type of data and information this study will yield. In the chapter entitled, "Qualitative Data Analysis for Applied Policy Research" in *The Qualitative Researcher's Companion* edited by Huberman and Miles (2002), the authors have outlined an exceptional framework by which the type of data from this study might be analyzed through structural, diagnostic, evaluative, and strategic questions. To bolster the structural and diagnostic inquiry, the political frame of reference as outlined by Bolman and Deal (2003) in *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership* has contributed to the scope of my inquiry. The inquiry model of Clark and Estes (2002) in *Turning Research into Results* provided insightful perspectives on the motivational gap that will be addressed in the implementation analysis as teacher issues are discussed.

Richard Elmore of Harvard University has produced a useful article for the Albert Shanker Institute (Elmore, 2002) of the American Federation of Teachers on "Bridging the Gap Between Standards and Achievement" that has focused on professional development and analysis of implementation but also provides insight into linkages between the quality of instruction and student achievement. A sourcebook entitled *Qualitative Data Analysis* is a helpful guide for development of the ongoing and final analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

### *The Elements of Civic Education*

The construct of civic education has broad implications in how all aspects of the subject are addressed. Civic education is a complex subject that includes content knowledge, cognitive and participatory

skills, and attitudes and dispositions. Fortunately, there is an abundance of literature that outlines and describes each of these aspects of civic education as well as curriculum materials and examples of how each of these aspects might be manifest in classroom application. Leading experts and scholars in the field of civic education have produced exceptional documents on the rationale, the issues, the curriculum content, the application of the curriculum, and best practices.

The defining of civic education begins with an exceptional overview on state civic education requirements presented by the National Alliance for Civic Education (National Alliance for Civic Education, n.d.), and a working definition of "citizenship education" from the Education Commission of the States website (Education Commission of the States, 2004a).

Dr. Margaret Stimmann Branson, Associate Director of the Center for Civic Education, has been a prolific author of position papers and articles that have outlined the need, the rationale, and the structure for high quality civic education (Branson, 2001/2002/2003/2004a/2004b). Other scholars associated with the Center for Civic Education include Charles N. Quigley (2003/2005), John J. Patrick (2003), Kenneth W. Tolo (Tolo & Policy Research Project, 1999), and Suzanne Soule (2001). In addition, the Center for Civic Education has web-based articles that promote civic education, identify notable practice and programs, present research on program effectiveness, and advocate for stronger support (Center for Civic Education, 2003a).

Another effective and distinguished organization, the Constitutional Rights Foundation, has contributed to the literature and documentation of effective civic education curriculum and practice. In particular, their effort to bring broad-based support to the national Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, in collaboration with other agencies and organizations, has spread to numerous states and local groups. Their article outlines the goals of civic education and provides examples of classroom projects and curriculum materials that support effective implementation (Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2003).

An extremely powerful document that outlines civic education from kindergarten through high school is an impressive background paper, "Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper for Policymakers and Educators" by Judith Torney-Purta and Susan Vermeer (2004). This document presents competency strands for grade level clusters, curriculum goals, examples of classroom application, and graphic depiction of the interface of civic education to real-life skills.

One of the most effective tools available to researchers on the extent of civic education today is the web-based presentation of survey data on all 50 states from the Education Commission of the States (ECS) on citizenship education. Their report is organized in an extensive table format and can be searched and organized by state and by survey item. Survey items include state standards, assessments, frameworks, statutes and laws, and graduation requirements in civic education as well as updates in policy changes (Education Commission of the States, 2004b). This website is also a rich source for articles and analysis of the data, all of which support the need to maintain high standards of civic education implementation. A related web page to this website is the National Alliance for Civic Education (NACE) (2004) that also provides narrative analysis and research on both the importance of civic education (National Alliance for Civic Education, n.d./b) and a survey of State requirements (National Alliance for Civic Education (n.d/a).

Surveys on civic responsibilities and studies that correlate civic education with civic engagement for students include survey results presented by Karl Kurtz, Alan Rosenthal, and Cliff Zukin (2003) in *Citizenship: A Challenge for All Generations* and *Will They Engage? Political Knowledge, Participation and Attitudes of Generations X and Y* by Suzanne Soule (2001).

The Albert Shanker Institute (2003b) of Washington, D.C. has produced a lengthy position paper on *Education for Democracy* that makes a case for teaching participatory democracy. This document also outlines disturbing trends that give cause for concern in

maintaining a healthy democracy now and into the future. An article that appeared in *Education Week*, "Accounting for Citizenship," by Johanek and Puckett (2004) developed the argument for stronger civic education in public schools in a succinct appraisal of the goals of education and identification of where greater emphasis is needed.

A meta-analysis of existing scholarship in the field has been compiled by Kathleen Cotton for the N. W. Regional Educational Laboratory in a monograph for the School Improvement Research Series (Cotton, 2001).

*Democratic Foundations for  
Civic Education Content, Cognitive Skills, and  
Participatory Engagement*

Professor John J. Patrick (2003) of Indiana University has authored and co-authored numerous articles and books on the elements of democracy. In his paper presented to scholars in Sarajevo, Bosnia, and Herzegovina in 2003, Dr. Patrick (2003) outlined 10 essential elements for teaching democracy in schools. His thesis aligns well with other articles on this subject, in particular, with the articles and research of Dr. Margaret Branson (2001a) and Dr. Judith Torney-Purta and Susan Vermeer (2004).

Two helpful books in understanding the overall goals of civic education and the issue of maintaining an enduring educational program to support participatory democracy is the book by Robert A. Dahl (1998), *On Democracy*, and *Republic on Trial: The Case for Representative Democracy* by Alan Rosenthal, Burdett A. Loomis, John R. Hibbing, and Karl T. Kurtz (2003).

Participatory engagement in the democratic process is a theme developed in *Citizen Democracy* by Stephen E. Frantzich (1999) and *Public Policymaking in a Democratic Society: A Guide to Civic Engagement* by Larry N. Gerston (2002). Both books are useful in providing both the philosophical and the practical aspects of participatory democracy.

A tool for both the classroom teacher and the designer of civic education curriculum is the article *Understanding Political Polls: A Key Citizenship Skill*

for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by Kevin Pobst (1999) to develop the framework for teaching participatory skills.

One of the most exceptional books on cognitive skill development in the history-social science domain is *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* by Sam Wineburg (2001). The critical element of cognitive skill development through higher level thinking skills is explored by veteran scholar, Dr. Fred Newmann, and his colleagues at the University of Wisconsin. An abstract of Dr. Newmann's work can be found at the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research website (Wisconsin Center for Educational Research, 1997).

#### *Civic Education in the Classroom*

Countless articles, books, and curriculum materials address the specifics of civic education in the classroom but a sampling of some of the range of subjects addressed in the articles include "Teaching About September 11 and Its Aftermath" by Howard D. Mehlinger (2002), "Teaching Tolerance: What Research Tells Us" by Patricia G. Avery (2002), "The New Civics Education: An Integrated Approach for Australian Schools" by Murray Print (1996), and "Learning to Legislate in an e-Congress" by Angela Stokes (2002).

A book on the structuring of schools in a democratic manner is the subject of essays in *Democratic Schools* edited by Michael W. Apple and James A. Beane (1995). Along the same lines of structuring schools to emphasize participatory democracy, is an exceptional book edited by Sheila Mann and John J. Patrick (2000), *Education for Civic Engagement in Democracy: Service Learning and Other Promising Practices* in which Mann and Patrick present a series of essays that report on research of effective programs and classroom practice.

Actual lessons on the democratic process in global studies can be found in *The Democratic Process: Promises and Challenges*, compiled through a collaborative effort of some of the leading civic education organizations and agencies (The American Forum for Global Education, 2003).

Civic education program assessment and research has been conducted by Vontz, Metcalf, and Patrick (2003), the Center for Civic Education; the Education Commission of the States (ECS), and the Constitutional Rights Foundation. Reports of this nature are critical in helping to define high quality civic education and effective implementation strategies.

*Standards and Assessment for Effective  
Instruction and Program Improvement*

Standards and assessment data are extremely helpful to the researcher in making conclusive analyses through comparable information; however, even with these useful tools, it requires additional scholarship to effectively use assessments. In the article on "Aligning Tests with States' Content Standards: Methods and Issues," authors Bhola, Impara, and Buckendahl (2003) have outlined strategies in alignment, although application of this process to larger comparison studies such as inter-state research is limited. Equally helpful in this same vein is the article "Beyond Finger-Pointing and Test Scores" (Allen & Hallett, n.d.).

Perhaps the most successful and effective researcher in the application of standards-based instruction in schools today is Robert J. Marzano. Marzano (2003) has developed a meta-analysis of the research in effective educational practices with a scale of effectiveness using the statistical process of correlation and effect size. This information is useful to this study for the implementation analysis.

Specific classroom application and small scale studies are presented by Sheldon H. Berman (2004) in "Teaching Civics: A Call to Action" and in "What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy" by Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne (2004). Westheimer and Kahne (2004) have developed a 3-tier classification system to differentiate citizenship actions and dispositions as the "Personally Responsible Citizen, the Participatory Citizen, and the Justice Oriented Citizen" (p. 3), which may be helpful in analyzing classroom activities and curricular goals but it does not take into account the abstract nature of civic education that

is rarely static in nature. Westheimer (2004) further develops the notion of the effect of politics on what is taught in the civics classroom in an article in research journal, *Political Science & Politics*.

Comparison of international assessments of civic education in 24 countries has been documented by Dr. Judith Torney-Purta (2004) based on results from a study commissioned by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). This IEA study is similar in scope and process to the TIMSS (Third International Math and Science Study) that measures student achievement in various countries with a very specific civic education focus. A synopsis of this project and related analysis is available in "The IEA Civic Education Project: National and International Perspectives" by Carole L. Hahn and Judith Torney-Purta (1999). Related articles, "What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U. S. Results from the International IEA Civic Education Study" (Baldi et al., 2001) and "What Adolescents Know About Citizenship and Democracy" (Torney-Purta, 2001) provide both rationale and content for development of a sound civic education curriculum.

The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) Civic Education study conducted in 1999 has provided national data for analysis by Judith Torney-Purta and Susan Vermeer (2004) in *Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12: A Background Paper for Policymakers and Educators*.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2001) provides sources of information and offers narrative analysis of the aggregated data, including data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). More specifically, the website provides case study information on 10 schools (Education Commission of the States, 2004c) and perspectives from school principals (Education Commission of the States, 2004h).

### *State Policy and Curriculum*

As described earlier, the most important set of information that is central to this project is the data

and survey information collected by the Education Commission of the States (2004e) that specifically address state policy and civic education. Some of the literature available from this source includes "State Policies to Support Citizenship Education" (Education Commission of the States, 2004b), "Citizenship Education Policy at the School District Level" (Education Commission of the States, 2004d), "Trends Show Need for Stronger Citizenship Education" (Education Commission of the States, 2004g), and "The Role of Principals in Citizenship Education: Integrating and Sustaining Quality Efforts in American Schools" (Education Commission of the States, 2004i).

A critically important document that must be the center of any discussion or study on civic education today is *The Circle Report*, published by Carnegie Corporation of New York & the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement in 2003. This document outlines the goals of civic education, the rationale for increased attention to civic education, recommendations for schools, recommendations for policymakers, and an overview of excellence in civic education (Carnegie Corporation, 2003). An outstanding example of multi-case study research was conducted by Jeffrey J. Miller (2004) "Citizenship Education in 10 U.S. High Schools" available on the ECS website.

A committee of educational and service-learning professionals was formed under the auspices of the California Department of Education and the result of 2 years of collaborative work produced *Linking Service and Civics through Service Learning: The Report from the Civic Responsibility Work Group* (Granicher, 2003). A position paper from the National Council on Social Studies on "Creating Effective Citizens" also lists civic education goals and effective program practices (National Council for the Social Studies, 2002).

An interesting overview of the issue of state policy and the development process can be found in the chapters, "The History and Evolution of the State Role in Education Policy" and "The State Political Process" in the book, *The Political Dynamics of American Education*, by Frederick M. Wirt and Michael W. Kirst (2001).



Very recently, the National Governors Association adopted a policy position on civic education and the responsibility for educating students. In "An Active, Knowledgeable Citizenry" (National Governors Association, 2004) the paper describes the rationale and the components necessary in maintaining high quality instruction in civic education. A powerful address to the Center for Civic Education conference on October 10, 2004 was delivered by the Honorable Senator Bob Jauch of Wisconsin in which he outlined the importance, the issues, and the responsibilities of policy makers as well as teachers to bring civic education to the highest level of quality possible (Jauch, 2004).

#### *State Information*

Information on specific states is available through numerous venues and on the ECS website but there are some publications that provide exceptional insight into the civic education outlook in certain states. The book *Education for Democracy: California Civic Education Scope and Sequence* is an exceptional example of the application of state standards to civic education. This book includes alignment of state, national and multiple subject standards as well as sample classroom applications for each grade level (Center for Civic Education, 2003b). The prolific resources available on the website of the Education Commission of the States include *Lessons Learned from the Five States Involved in the Policy and Practice Demonstration Project* (Education Commission of the States, 2001) and *The Progress of Reform 2004: Citizenship Education* (Education Commission of the States, 2004f).

The Public Policy Institute of California has also prepared a research brief on "Participating in Democracy: Civic Engagement in California" (Public Policy Institute of California, 2004). A summary of state-based initiatives is available in "State-Based Civics Initiatives" by Debra Henzey (2003). A very insightful look at performance assessment in Maryland is outlined in the article, "Improving Performance

Assessment with the Help of the Internet: The Experience of Maryland" (Taylor-Thoma, 2004).

From an international perspective for comparative purposes, Torney-Purta (2004) has summarized common topics on citizenship education across international boundaries in her abstract of a panel presentation on the IEA Civic Education Study, *Creating Citizenship: Youth Development for Free and Democratic Society* (1999).

Finally, "Civic Education by Mandate: A State-by-State Analysis" provides an analysis of the civic education programs at post-secondary schools (Kedrowski, 2003).

### CHAPTER 3

#### METHODOLOGY FOR THE STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIVIC EDUCATION AND STATE POLICY

Civic Education is evident in many state curriculum documents related to history-social science, but it appears to play a far less significant role in assessments, classroom instruction, and curriculum development when compared to other academic and required courses. Because state policy is a critical factor in establishing and maintaining high quality curriculum implementation in any given academic subject, particularly through accountability measures, it follows that effective civic education curriculum implementation will require sufficient state policy support in state standards, assessment, and implementation in order to be a viable and essential component in education today. Civic education has become marginalized in today's education system and remains, to date, a minor component in most History-Social Science curricula (Pascopella, 2004).

The broad expanse of issues and variables that affect program implementation in civic education, the focus on quality, the need for in-depth analysis of political policy, and the complexity of structural issues surrounding this topic merit a qualitative study. Examination of the contextual variables includes the need to gain understanding and insights into the political process, human resources, and existing programs, all of which vary greatly from state-to-state and from locale-to-locale. A qualitative study of this type provides an opportunity to yield information which may be useful for future initiatives and to improve existing programs.

Evaluation of state curriculum documents, student achievement data, and interview information is the basis for the qualitative review. Presentation of the information and data is presented in chapter 4 and analysis of the information is presented in chapter 5. Analysis of the information and data obtained from all sources is examined through contextual, diagnostic, evaluative, and strategic frameworks (Ritchie & Spencer, 2002).

*The Purpose of an Evaluative  
Study in Civic Education*

This study examines the relationship between state policy that explicitly addresses civic education curriculum and instruction in kindergarten through Grade 12 and student achievement levels in civic knowledge, cognitive and participatory skills, and attitudes and dispositions that result in active engagement in the citizenship process. More specific information has been garnered through interviews and document review in states that include California, Delaware, Idaho, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania. A particular focus on California provides an abbreviated case study by which comparative information from all 50 states is used for general comparison purposes.

Although issues of critical concern are primarily found in curriculum policy, there are also issues that are systemic in nature. Systemic issues would include neglect on the part of program managers or policymakers to include civic education in assessments, as a part of graduation requirements, or as a theme for organizing interdisciplinary studies. There may also be a lack of systematic development, articulation, promotion, and programmatic accountability in civic education. Implementation issues may include teacher attitudes, motivational or incentive rewards, effective curriculum materials, adequate administrative support, fiscal support, and public awareness. Interview and survey data have provided some insights into these issues.

*Design Summary and Units of Analysis*

Qualitative analysis for an evaluative study such as this is appropriate when the following conditions exist: (a) individualized outcomes, (b) program processes are non-standardized, (c) contextual issues are critical variables and vary widely, (d) evaluation of data requires multiple interactions for explanations and clarifications, (e) democratic dialogue and deliberation is valued and a part of the research process; (f) immeasurable outcomes are expected; (g) the analysis

requires an in-depth description, and (h) the focus of the study is on quality (Patton, 2002). Due to the nature of a multitude of external and contextual variables that affect curriculum policy, curriculum implementation, and student achievement, it is difficult to draw definitive correlations and generalizations between state documents that are often vague and student achievement levels in specific curriculum domains that are affected by external conditions, many of which are beyond the scope of the school and classroom. Although it will be useful to quantify the research data, particularly in the area of the extent of state policy and student achievement, this study makes use of qualitative data to identify effective strategies that have promoted positive growth in the civic education agenda.

This evaluative study of civic education policy is based on document review, interviews, and survey data, including a limited amount of assessment information. The step-by-step process began with data collection from existing surveys. Based on predetermined criteria, eight states were identified for interviews with state history-social science specialists or civic education curriculum leaders (i.e., California, Idaho, Maryland, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania). Document analysis of state standards, state statutes or laws, state frameworks, and state curriculum requirements were examined. Student achievement data, where available, have been examined and quantified.

The analysis of the data has identified general trends, issues, and patterns through the use of a framework for a qualitative data analysis on policy research as developed by Jane Ritchie and Liz Spencer (2002) in "Qualitative Data Analysis for Applied Policy Research." The quantitative analysis has been codified through the indices as developed and displayed in appendices A, B, and C (rating scales for state policy, student achievement levels, and implementation levels). A narrative description of the data and categories discusses the information and the codification process as well as information on variables such as teacher motivation, state accountability systems, and other curriculum issues in chapter 4. Representation of data

is provided in both table and narrative form. Chapter 5 provides a more in-depth analysis and interpretation of data and information and concludes with recommendations based on effective and promising practice (Cresswell, 2003).

Data collection includes state survey data as collected and organized from the Education Commission of the States (ECS), participant survey data from the Center for Civic Education, state assessment data on civic education and history-social science, the 1998 NAEP civic education results, and the 2002 IEA study on civic education.

Document analysis includes review of state standards, state frameworks, state statutes, and state assessments. Using information collected and graphically organized by the Education Commission of the States on civic education state policy, selected state documents that are most relevant have been identified and examined through the data analysis lens of quantifying the extent of state policy and qualifying the extent of implementation levels.

Interviews with selected state History-Social Science Specialists have provided information to determine the strength of state policy on standards, assessments, the policy development process, professional development, and student achievement. Other issues discussed include implementation levels, factors that support or hinder implementation levels, and student achievement results. Written materials and interviews with nationally recognized experts in civic education have provided the context for establishing criteria of high quality civic education, national issues, and general trends throughout the system. This study uses the more specific focus on California curriculum and 10 other states (Delaware, Idaho, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania) to provide specific examples and in-depth perspectives for specific comparison. Information from all 50 states will be used for general comparison purposes on assessments, policy documents, and requirements.

#### *Sampling Strategy and Delimitations*

The sampling strategy for this study is one of criterion sampling, that is, the sampling is based on specific criteria for the purposes of comparison and individualized results as would be found in a case study. This inquiry into the policies of several states is similar to a multi-subject case study, but limited in which only specific characteristics will be under scrutiny. This process may be termed a "stratified purposeful sampling" in that this evaluative study will "illustrate characteristics of particular subgroups of interest [to] facilitate comparisons" (Patton, 2002, p. 244).

The sampling strategy in choosing the 11 states on which to base comparison and case study information came from the survey information collected by the Education Commission of the States (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 2003) and information from the Center for Civic Education on current programs (Center for Civic Education, 2004a). The criteria for selection of states were based on state standards, state assessments, state statutes, and specific program adoptions. The states of California, Delaware, Idaho, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania provide a range of state policy documents from little existing policy documentation to extensive documentation. In spite of the sampling strategy, each state is very unique. Idaho has a very limited state policy in regard to civic education but does have strong programmatic elements in place for all grade levels. Maryland has somewhat limited state policy but programmatic structures that are very extensive. Ohio has a stronger state policy in place but less apparent programmatic accountability. New York and California have strong state policies in place as well as some accountability measures, but differ greatly in programmatic accountability.

The delimitations that provide the scope of which this study proposes to examine include specific documents such as state standards, state assessments, state curriculum frameworks, and state policy. The delimitations of student achievement levels include wide variance on available state assessment data. Implementation levels will be determined through two main venues

that include existing survey data from the Center for Civic Education and interview information (Center for Civic Education, 2004b).

Although it may be possible to draw some conclusions and generalizations from this study, the significance lies more in identification of effective state policy and effective practice that may be replicated in other locales and, possibly, to other curriculum domains. Limitations are evident, also, in the student achievement data in that testing data from state to state is not necessarily comparable as there are no reliability and validity measures that would allow for quantitative comparison; nonetheless, this information will be useful in determining the effect of the policy in each respective state.

Another important limitation includes the very subjective nature of interview material and the inherent inability to quantify subjective responses to open-ended questions. A final factor in outlining the delimitations of a study such as this is the political reality of an ever-changing political process in which policies and programs appear and disappear and change with alarmingly short notice and on a regular basis. This is a delimiting factor in that as any one policy comes under scrutiny, major changes may have taken place within a very short timeframe. It would be safe to say that as this project nears completion, many of the factors that were in place at the time of research will no longer be applicable.

This study will be limited to a narrow scope of document review, a small sample of interviewees, a limited timeframe, and a limited amount of assessment data. This study has limited applicability for broad generalization, but the results may yield important insights into the relationship between state policy and civic education implementation and student achievement as might be found in case study research or small sample comparisons.

#### *Methods of Data Collection and Procedure*

Initial data for all 50 states has been retrieved from the Education Commission of the States website



under "Citizenship Education: State Profiles" (Education Commission of the States, n.d.). This website displays survey information on civic or citizenship education in state standards, frameworks, state assessments, state statutes or laws, administrative codes, recent policies or policy changes, and graduation requirements. This information has provided the basis for determining preliminary distinctions between levels of the strengths of state policies. Verification of this information has been attempted through interviews with state history-social science specialists.

Data for student achievement has been retrieved from state education websites, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) website, and verified through interviews with state history-social science specialists. This data is more quantitative and will be indexed for the purposes of this study, but we must caution against generalizations from this data due to the unreliability of comparable measures from state-to-state.

Implementation levels have been determined primarily through two venues with supporting information from a third source. The first and most important source of information on implementation levels will be obtained through interviews with state history-social science specialists. A second contributing source of information has been data from the Center for Civic Education, a leading organization that provides curriculum and curriculum materials to schools on civic education in Grades K-12. Teacher surveys provide a third source of information, although these represent a highly selective sample. Surveys have been obtained from the Center for Civic Education of teachers who have attended summer institutes for civic education and a state survey from New Hampshire. Although the teacher surveys do not reflect a random sampling of the entire teacher population, the information is useful in determining certain aspects of teacher motivation, barriers to implementation, and support levels.

In addition to the information available on the websites, independent organizations have been extremely cooperative in sharing survey and quantitative informa-

tion from their own records. Interviews, both personal and by phone, have been conducted using the interview questions found in appendix E. Follow-up review of interview notes and state policy index ratings have been made to every individual for clarification and verification.

Finally, analysis and information regarding the very nature of civic education has been compiled from a multitude of written sources and informal interviews with civic education scholars who are recognized as outstanding experts in the field.

### *Data Comparisons and Instrumentation*

The instrumentation used for the comparisons has been codified as Levels of State Policy (Levels 1-5) in appendix A, Student Achievement Levels (Levels 1-4) in appendix B, and Implementation Levels (Levels 1-5) in appendix C.

A scale to measure the extent of state policy as determined by state standards, assessments, statutes or laws, frameworks or other support documents, and graduation requirements from Level 1 (no requirements or standards) to Level 5 (requirements and standards at all grade levels) is outlined in appendix A.

Student achievement levels are indicated by National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) scores, state assessment scores, and nationally-normed tests on a 1 to 4 level index reflecting NAEP categories of below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced (appendix B).

Implementation levels are indicated on the rating scale in appendix C. Implementation is based on comprehensive curriculum integration of civic education in all grade levels (Kindergarten through Grade 12), teacher preparation or in-services participation rate in civic education, materials in use, teacher commentary or feedback, and support or administrative oversight in civic education implementation. These are measured through interviews with state curriculum specialists, quantitative survey data, qualitative survey data, and other written or interview commentary (appendix C).

Indicators of high quality civic education implementation are listed in appendix D. The use of this

information supports the determination of the level of implementation, particularly when indexing the interview data to implementation levels as indicated on the scale in appendix C.

#### *Data Analysis Framework*

The data analysis framework is based on the work by Ritchie and Spencer (2002) which identifies four frameworks by which one might analyze qualitative information. The four frameworks are contextual, diagnostic, evaluative, and strategic. These frameworks by which the data will be analyzed fit well with an evaluative study of this nature. The questions associated with each of these categories form the basis of this study. Many questions have been directly addressed through interviews and other issues are related to the information secured from document review and surveys.

The contextual focus questions include the following:

1. *What is the design of state education and curriculum system (frameworks, standards, assessments, etc.)?*
2. *How are resources allocated? Are schools and teachers provided with adequate training, funding, and materials?*
3. *How is civic education currently addressed in state policy?*
4. *What power is held by the central authority, i.e., the state, in implementation oversight?*

The diagnostic focus questions include the following:

1. *What factors affect state policy decision-making in curriculum issues?*
2. *How are needs, gaps, and implementation levels assessed at a state level?*
3. *Why are programs used or not used? What incentives or rewards are offered for implementation?*

The evaluative focus questions include the following:

1. *How does policy affect implementation levels?*
2. *How does policy affect student achievement?*

3. *What type of administrative support does implementation of high quality civic education curriculum require?*

4. *What are the barriers and constraints upon teachers for implementation?*

5. *What are the causes of varying levels of implementation?*

The strategic focus questions include the following:

1. *What are some of the resources that are needed to improve implementation levels?*

2. *How might deficiencies in the curriculum delivery system be addressed (state to district to school levels)?*

3. *What actions might be taken to make civic education programs and curriculum more effective?*

4. *How can the system be improved?*

The contextual and diagnostic questions will be addressed in chapter 4, "Findings on the Status of Civic Education and State Policy." The evaluative and strategic issues will be raised and addressed in chapter 5, "An Evaluative Discussion of the Relationship between Civic Education and State Policy."

#### *Data Verification and Reliability*

Due to the nature of evaluative studies, data verification is critical in maintaining the integrity of this report. Data verification has been established through a process of checks and re-examination of interview data, state policy, and survey information. The three methods of data collection (surveys, interviews, and document analysis) establish the triangulation of sources of information.

The interview information has been verified through an ongoing dialogue and review with the interviewees for verification of statements, commentary, and evaluative conclusions. Survey information, state policies, and contextual variables such as teacher motivation have been cross-referenced to interviews with the state curriculum specialists.

Researcher bias has been mitigated through the ongoing process of peer review and evaluation verification with the interviewees, the staff of related agencies, civic education scholars, and website revisits. The nature of this study is an example of ongoing evaluation over the course of 2 years of research, analysis, evaluation, and review. Peer support and ongoing dialogue with civic education specialists provide critical contributions to chapters 4 and 5 in which final commentary will be brought to bear upon the problem of the marginalization of civic education in the classrooms, schools, and communities of today.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### *The Findings: A Contextual Analysis of the Current Status of Civic Education*

The design of state curricula and accountability systems is a complicated and often confusing set of documents, processes, and contextual variables that converge to produce a snapshot, at any given time, on the status of teaching and learning. State policy, too, is articulated through a broad range of documents that, for the most part, are connected to the existing practices and programs in education or intend to have an effect on curriculum strategies and content.

Most states have departments of education, as well as staff that are assigned to specific aspects of the curriculum. Most states have adopted standards in history, social science, social studies, citizenship, geography, government, economics, and civics in one or some combination of the aforementioned disciplines for grades Kindergarten through Grade 12. Some states have identified standards in grade level clusters (e.g., K-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12). Some states are still in the process of adopting state standards in history-social science, or social studies, and some are in the process of revising existing state standards.

States have also produced frameworks, course outlines, common curriculum, core curriculum, scope and sequence, course models, and other designations of resources that provide guidance on how to construct lessons with regard for appropriate content, pedagogy, and cognitive skills at each grade level. The desired results of content-specific course outlines are specifically outlined in various states and may be called benchmarks, end-of-level testing, learning results, competency requirements, and essential skills. Performance levels have been set in those states that have testing as a part of their accountability system. Although virtually every state has mandatory testing in reading and math as a result of the federal *No Child*

*Left Behind Act of 2001*, far fewer states require testing in history, social studies, or civic education.

Regulatory policy is a very common type of civic education initiative to which schools are accountable. Most state policy originates from a state board of education or with the state legislature. A common division of responsibility exists in many states in which legislation is the initial impetus and the state board develops the operational policy. State departments of education are then given the charge of implementing the policy and working out the details at a school and district level. This policy is often developed as a constructivist framework, in that policies at this level usually attempt to define a model that sets high quality standards for teaching, learning, and curriculum development from which operational models then set their goals and targets (Sabatier, 1999). In civic education, with so many professional groups and nonprofit organizations working as advocates and promoters, it is not uncommon to see a coalition policy development process (Sabatier, pp. 117-166) as groups collaborate on policy, strategies, and program development. It would be wise to caution at this point that "policy output," that which is written, is often in stark contrast to "policy outcomes," that which is implemented (Anderson, 1990, pp. 223-234).

In 2004, the National Governors Association adopted a policy position paper endorsing civic education, entitled "An Active and Knowledgeable Citizenry." The rationale for intentional, focused instruction in citizenship education was outlined as "integral to a complete K-12 education," and further, that the "Governors support federal initiatives that seek to help states educate a more knowledgeable citizenry" to "better prepare students for life in a global economy" (National Governors Association, 2004). This policy remains effective through 2006 and provides the foundation for continued development, implementation, and review of civic education nationwide.

#### *State Policy Language*

In most states, civic education appears to be addressed in some form or, at the very least, referenced in regard to government or constitutional history lessons. Forty-five states have specific state statutes or administrative code policy and mandates for civic education (Education Commission of the States, 2003a). The statutes, or laws, range from specific topics to be addressed (e.g., California, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Wisconsin) to the broad concepts of democracy such as civic heritage, the duties and obligations of citizenship, the principles and ideals of patriotism and participatory democracy (most states). Broad and magnanimous policy statements with little specificity are common such as that in Arizona where "American institutions and ideals," are required to be taught (Education Commission of the States, n.d.), but lacks direction as to actual content for educators implementing curriculum. Some states require or authorize a service learning component (e.g., Minnesota, Oklahoma).

A small number of states recognize civics as a separate subject (Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Vermont, among others). Character development and identification of specific character traits are explicit in several states (e.g., Indiana, South Dakota, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia). Many states reference the requirement to teach the Pledge of Allegiance and American Flag etiquette (Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Nebraska, New York, and Tennessee, among others). Democratic values and ideals are required to be taught in several states (e.g., Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Texas, Utah). A large majority of states require instruction in primary source documents such as the *United States Constitution*, the *Declaration of Independence*, the *Federalist Papers*, and state constitutions.

While much of the state policy language regarding civic education is framed in patriotic imagery, lofty ideals, and profound language, the operational requirements are frequently of detailed specificity (e.g., "learn the Pledge of Allegiance . . . ," Tennessee) or of a personal attribute nature (e.g., "special emphasis on honesty, morality, courtesy . . . ," Indiana) (Education Commission of the States, n.d.) and



very little is transferable to pedagogy without liberal amounts of interpretation, application, and real-life adjustments to the classroom and school structure.

*State Standards, Assessment,  
Graduation Requirements,  
and Accountability in  
Civic Education*

The public agenda has decried a need for increased accountability in all academic subjects and with that, the standards movement was born. Civic education has not escaped the process of curriculum restructuring and most states have incorporated some civic education standards into social studies or history-social science curriculum design (Education Commission of the States, n.d.).

Standards in civic education are, most often, found as a component of the history-social science or social studies standards in most states. In some states, civics is listed as a separate strand or a cross-grade concept to be referenced through grade level-specific course content. Many states have derived their standards that address civics as variations, in some form or another, from the National Standards for Civics and Government published by the Center for Civic Education (Center for Civic Education, 1994). A large number of curriculum specialists are in agreement that assessment drives the curriculum and, in spite of the many states in which there is a one semester requirement of civics, usually at Grade 12, there frequently is no state assessment in civics (or government). In some states, there is policy language that requires students to pass a civics class for graduation, but often there is no assessment or accountability to provide quality control. Forty-one states require specific instruction in civic education and 41 states and the District of Columbia require completion of a high school course in civics and/or government as a graduation requirement. Five states require students to pass a high school exit exam with a civics component. Twenty-two states include civics in state assessment systems and 14 states include civic education assessment data in their accountability

systems (Education Commission of the States, 2004e). For states that require civics be a part of the assessment system, specific data on civic knowledge are rarely available in disaggregated form from the more general social studies test scores (Ohio and New York are among the exceptions).

A notable finding in the research is the obvious lack of available or easy-to-access assessment data from state websites. For most states in which assessment data are available, the search requires an exceptional amount of search time and multiple efforts by which one might access state data. For most states, the data were either not posted or it was inordinately difficult to find, even with the use of specialized site search engines. Most states lacked the information or data entirely on history-social science.

National data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) provide information on student achievement levels in civic education for the country as a whole, but neither study disaggregates the data by state. Major findings of the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment show that approximately 70% of students tested (in Grades 4, 8, and 12) scored at the basic or above level. "About 25% of students at each grade level performed at or above the "proficient" level," but "While most students have a basic knowledge of civics, it is apparent that their understanding of civics could be strengthened" (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999). In the IEA study, 9th graders in the United States were assessed on two civic knowledge subscales, civic content and civic skills. On civic knowledge in general, the students scored "significantly above the international average on the total civic knowledge scale." In civic content (i.e., principles or pivotal ideas), the students' average scores "did not differ significantly from the international mean" and in civic skills (i.e., interpretive skills), U. S. students "performed significantly higher than the international mean on the civic skills subscale" (Baldi et al., 2001, p. xv).

*Perspectives on Civic Education  
Implementation in Selected States*

Interviews with state history-social science and civic education specialists yielded identification of several common issues that affect implementation levels of civic education. In addition to the common issues, each state provided insights into teacher factors, administrative factors, resource availability, and policy factors that either promoted or hindered curriculum delivery.

Factors that impede civic education curriculum delivery at the classroom level include (a) inadequate time within the school day (California, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania); (b) an overwhelming amount of required standards in all subjects (California, New York, Ohio, Oregon); and (c) a statewide focus on subjects that are specifically required by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (California, New York, Pennsylvania). In California, the history-social science standards were designed to have civics concepts embedded, but it is difficult to separate the civics content and there exists a minimal amount of resources from the state, notwithstanding the exceptional and specific *Education for Democracy: California Civic Education Scope and Sequence*, developed in partnership with the Center for Civic Education and the Los Angeles County Office of Education (Center for Civic Education et al., 2003b) to assist in this effort.

Another issue facing classroom teachers is the difficulty in developing civic education assessments that are authentic in that students have an opportunity to demonstrate application of civic concepts and cognitive skills such as evaluation, multiple perspectives, and the use of supporting data to build a coherent, logical argument. Multiple choice tests are easier to design, score, and report results but they offer limited insight into conceptual application skill levels.

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* has posed a particular problem for history-social science in general and in civic education in particular as the mandate identifies requirements in math, reading, and science

but has ignored the social sciences thus forcing schools to emphasize all of the core academic subjects but history-social science. There is high pressure placed on teachers to spend a very high percentage of classroom time on subjects that are tested. This has contributed to the erosion of history, civics, government, and other social science disciplines taught at all grade levels. In many cases, history-social science has been marginalized to play a minor part of academic instruction. There is little recognition, through policy statements or in practice, of the need to integrate civic education topics and concepts through writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills.

Some states, such as Idaho and Ohio, have successfully brought teachers together to serve as focus groups or in collegial work sessions that develop and determine support material for history-social science curriculum. In Idaho, the network of teachers that came together under the auspices of the Department of Education developed into a valuable partnership that produced guiding grade level course sequence documents for the state school system. The strength of this network remained a viable effort through which civic education maintained a prominent place in the curriculum.

Supplemental student programs are very strong in states such as Missouri, Texas, New York, Oregon, and Ohio where the state departments have partnered with other professional organizations such as state bar associations and youth advocacy groups. This additional pool of funding and human resources has helped to maintain student programs in many states which might otherwise lack adequate resources to support student events and programs.

Teacher preparation is an issue in some states. New York requires a social studies credential for teachers of Grades 7 through 12. Unfortunately, it is a common pattern that in many states, teachers at the primary and intermediate grades have had insufficient instruction in social studies methods and content. Likewise in many states, there is confusion regarding the appropriate place in the curriculum for civic education where history teachers see civic education as

an add-on and other teachers are unable to see how it would fit into their existing curriculum.

Although a few states have started to innovate with demonstration schools that use civic education as a central focus across disciplines (e.g., California, Ohio), most states typically relegate civic education to the history department and often to one teacher alone. The connections and extensions of civic education into all aspects of school governance, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and research skills has yet to reach the critical mass of educators who might embrace the renewal of the civic mission of schools. States such as Idaho that have successfully developed school-wide programs have brought teachers along in a collaborative process. Idaho has developed a model curriculum in which character education is integrated into civic education themes and is widely taught in elementary schools throughout the state.

Ongoing professional development requirements are common across states, but the typical modus operandi for meeting this obligation is to allow individual teachers to choose among an infinite number of options and professional development in civic education may or may not be among the options. Idaho offers state-sponsored summer workshops on curriculum development and improvement in civic education and related subjects. Other states support annual conferences and workshops.

Teacher attitudes, also, play a critical role in how civic education is or is not delivered. For many teachers, civic education is an add-on subject and one in which many feel it is more of a luxury than a necessity. Lack of team efforts or conscientious integration of subject matter in producing student engagement and experiential learning is due, in large part, to a common perception of lack of support, time, and resources, which may be, in fact, a true reflection of the reality.

Lack of state support has certainly helped to determine the current status of civic education and history-social science curriculum implementation levels. Many states lack adequate fiscal support (e.g., California, Missouri, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania) and state supported professional development programs in

civic education (California, Missouri). Ohio does not have required social studies texts at any grade level but even in California where the state textbook adoption process includes review of material for inclusion of civic education concepts, there is little accountability of civic education delivery from that point forward. Lack of funds has caused Missouri to drop required testing in social studies and charge the districts for the now voluntary test. It may be a very positive factor that some states are in the process of revising and improving state standards and support materials in history-social science (Maryland, Minnesota, South Carolina, and Oregon, among others). The revision process itself can reinvigorate and expand interest in the discipline and the delivery.

Accountability and oversight is a function of a strong system that clearly operates in concert with all of the components such as adequate teacher preparation, useful assessments of student learning, tracking of student data, support materials development, program evaluation, and intentional and appropriate curriculum delivery. While some states clearly have systems that address all aspects of student learning, other states have instituted components when and wherever possible. Some states lack even the most basic of standards-based instruction systems in civic education. Voluntary curricula in states such as Maryland and Missouri have little or no state oversight. Pennsylvania requires a local assessment in civic education but there is no state oversight or accountability to gage quality control or set performance levels. Other states have turned to ingenuity to promote the civic education agenda.

Idaho included civic education as a requirement of the school accountability report card and bypassed the need to have accountability legislated as a separate measure. The state department was able to leverage political justification through existing state policy that included civics in the accountability process. Currently, all site principals are required to annually assess civic education implementation in their schools and report the results on their accountability report card.

Virtually, all secondary schools in all states are required to comply with university and college accreditation systems if they are to remain viable as institutions which meet the standards in providing adequate preparation for students advancing to higher education. California, in particular, is under the auspices of an independent accrediting association (Western Accreditation of Schools and Colleges) that has an indirect accountability factor built into the self-study process which provides rubrics and inquiry prompts into school culture and citizenship issues. Missouri, among others, also makes use of the accreditation system to support the accountability measures.

Local control is frequently offered as a rationale for little or no state level interference and can, in many cases, be a welcome designation. Unfortunately, in some cases, this may be more of a discharging of overall responsibility, perhaps due at least in part, to the effort and expense involved in taking on statewide projects. A shift to local control may very well be in response to budgetary or human resource constraints. The lack of quality control in these circumstances continues to remain an issue.

Policy issues and problems associated with state policy arise from numerous factors but are common to many states. These issues include political polarization, political appointees with little or no background in education, short-term or limited focus areas, unclear lines of authority, and confusion or lack of communication among stakeholders and policymakers. In California, as well as other states, three distinct entities make and implement policy, often in isolation from each other resulting in conflicting policies and messages. The California State Board of Education, the California Department of Education, and the State legislature operate in very independent spheres and none of the three have the luxury of time for fact-finding, soliciting input, or researching existing resources prior to policy development. Even within the California Department of Education, there are numerous divisions and offices to which each project is responsible and often the communication between divisions is less than optimal.

California policies, like many states, are often short-sighted and the system frequently operates in a crisis mode, responding to issues of high public profile and less to overall system coordination. Contributing to this part of the problem that stems from the legislature, term limits have imposed condensed timeframes on elected officials and there is often insufficient time for legislators to become informed or educated on current issues. The California State Board of Education, like others in many states, is composed of political appointees who often lack knowledge and experience in education. Similarly in New York, the state Chancellor is appointed and often comes into office with a background in business rather than education. Policy itself may stem from focus and advocacy groups that have been reported to operate in states such as Ohio and Oregon. Independent groups and panels are helpful in obtaining commitment and valuable feedback from the field in program development, but it requires a state department that is receptive to including a feedback and input process into the curriculum development cycle. Once again, time is a villainous factor.

Several states such as California and Ohio have formed Civic Mission of Schools commissions and task forces that have taken upon themselves the role of advocates and designers of high quality civic education. Other states have been found to have incorporated model programs with progressive agendas due, in large part, to the effort of strong individuals who have been able to drive state-wide reform and improvement efforts with high levels of success (Idaho, Michigan, and Maryland, among others).

*A Diagnostic Review of Documents,  
Interview Data, and Current  
Research: Identification  
of Issues*

Common issues that are problematic in defining, developing, and implementing civic education as identified across states include the following:



1. The amount of required subjects, topics, and standards across disciplines results in a very crowded curriculum in which teachers are often forced to make choices between curricular goals, all of which are compelling, important, and required.

2. Assessments drive the curriculum and civic education testing is not mandatory.

3. Civic education tends to be conceptual in nature and problematic in standardized assessment reporting.

4. Civics standards are not stand alone and, therefore, are difficult to assess separately.

5. There is limited funding, professional development, and resources.

6. There is a lack of adequate instructional time and/or opportunities for interdisciplinary approaches within a classroom or a school.

7. Frequently, there is a preponderance of local control but little or no overall state oversight.

8. In some states, the state political structure can be an impediment in adjusting or changing current policy in civic education. In some states, the standards are currently undergoing revision. Table 1 summarizes interview and survey data on selected states

Table 1. *Issues Affecting Civic Education Implementation as Identified By Selected State Curriculum Specialists*

Issues identified	CA	ID	MD	MO	NH	NY	OH	OR	PA
Crowded curriculum	✓					✓		✓	
Assessments drive the curriculum/ Civic education testing is not mandatory	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
Conceptual in nature and problematic in standardized assessment reporting					✓	✓			
Civics Standards are not stand alone	✓								
Limited funding				✓			✓	✓	✓
Lack of adequate instructional time	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
Limited state level professional development	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Lack of new teacher preparation						✓			
Lack of interdisciplinary approach					✓	✓			
Local control but little or no overall state oversight		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
State political structure can be an impediment	✓	✓				✓			
Currently in development			✓					✓	

in the identification of issues that are problematic in implementation of civic education policy (Table 1).

In examination of the identified issues among states, it appears that most problems stem from a few common sets of circumstances. The first condition is one of disconnected components of standards-based instruction that are implemented unevenly or without

an overall systemic plan in place. The social, educational, and political costs of random implementation efforts are a reflection of the lack of coordinated standards-based components such as well designed standards, multiple measures of assessment, informed instruction, feed back and continuous improvement loops, clear purpose, systematized oversight, and adequate resources.

A second set of circumstances lies within the civic education discipline itself. Civic education is far more than a set of knowledge-based facts or information. Civic education, by its very nature, is conceptual in nature and requires skills far beyond memorization and recall. Among civic education and social studies specialists, there is broad recognition of the inappropriateness of standardized testing in the typical selected response (multiple choice) format to measure student learning in civic education concepts and yet this type of testing is the basis on which resources and policy decisions are based.

On a broad scale, there is a lack of a standardized set of indicators on which to index student learning. There is no agreement either among states or even within most states on how to assess the needs, gaps, and implementation levels assessed at a state or local level that will accommodate overall improvement in the field. Table 2 summarizes indexed levels of civic education policy, assessment, and implementation for selected states.

The state policy index rating is based on interview and post-interview communications with state history-social science specialists using the index rubric in Appendix A. History-social science and civic education assessment data availability was determined through interviews, surveys, and web searches. Social science assessment scores, when available, were measured against the student achievement index in Appendix B. Implementation levels were determined on the Civic Education Implementation Level index as found in Appendix C through interview information and assigned solely by the author in an effort to maintain constant relativity of comparisons between interviewees (Table 2).

Table 2. *State Policy in Civic Education and Curriculum Delivery: Selected States*

State	State policy index as per interviews and/or web searches (1-5 scale)	History-social science (or social studies) assessment data available <sup>7</sup>	Civics assessment data available <sup>8</sup>	Social science assessment Scores <sup>9</sup> by index (1-4 scale)	Implementation levels as per interviews and/or surveys (1-5 scale)
California	3.6	Yes <sup>10</sup>	No	2	3
Delaware	N/A	Yes <sup>11</sup>	No	2	N/A
Idaho	3.8	No	No	N/A	4
Maryland	3.7	No	No	N/A	3.5
Michigan	N/A	Yes <sup>12</sup>	N/A	2	N/A
Missouri	3.8	Yes <sup>13</sup>	N/A	2	2
New Hampshire					
New York					
Ohio	4.0	Yes <sup>14</sup>	Yes	4	4
Oregon	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	4 (based on survey) <sup>15</sup>
Pennsylvania	3.7	Yes <sup>16</sup>	No	3	3

<sup>7</sup> Based on web searches December 2004–January 2005

<sup>8</sup> Information is based on web searches December 2004–January 2005

<sup>9</sup> Middle and High School averaged scores

<sup>10</sup> California Department of Education (n.d.)

<sup>11</sup> State of Delaware, Department of Education (n.d.)

<sup>12</sup> Michigan Department of Education (n.d.)

<sup>13</sup> Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, n.d.)

<sup>14</sup> Ohio Department of Education (n.d.)

<sup>15</sup> New Hampshire (2003)

<sup>16</sup> New York State Education Department (n.d.)

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### *An Evaluative Discussion on the Relationship of Civic Education and State Policy*

The need for increased attention and effective implementation of high quality civic education has been well documented through research, surveys, and documents that have analyzed of the requirements of a healthy democracy and the current status of civic education delivery systems in the nation. Study after study has documented the decline in political interest (Kurtz, Rosenthal, & Zukin, 2003), a decline in voting rates among young people (Kurtz et al., 2003), deterioration of attitudes toward political involvement (Albert Shanker Institute, 2003a), a general lack of civic knowledge (National Center for Educational Statistics, n.d.), and widespread lack of civic skills (Tolo, 1999). Because "The habits of the mind, as well as what Alexis de Tocqueville called the 'habits of the heart,' the dispositions that inform the democratic ethos, are not inherited" (Center for Civic Education, 1995), we must structure our schools to embrace the mission of educating for democracy. "Each generation must be taught anew through systematic, rigorous, and stimulating instruction in civic education" (Quigley, 2003). Fortunately, we have witnessed, over the last decade, the birth of a national movement, the Civic Mission of Schools,<sup>17</sup> to advocate and support high quality civic education implementation (Quigley, 2004), but the challenge for implementation at all grade levels and in all schools remains elusive.

This evaluative study has surveyed information regarding state policy language and practice to

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<sup>17</sup> The Civic Mission of Schools is a national initiative to promote and advocate for increased attention to civic education as a central responsibility of the nation's education system. Each state has been charged with supporting this mission and bringing state and local leaders together to develop and implement a state plan to promote high quality civic education.

effectively set the stage for increased attention to implementation levels and student achievement. Although this study has distinct limitations as to the analysis of the issues in a general sense, there are general trends and resolutions to which the recommendations remain applicable across a broad spectrum of states, school districts, and classrooms. Still, it is important to outline some of the limitations of this study at the outset.

One of the most important limitations is the individualized nature of the various state education systems, accountability systems, state law, state requirements, and state policy that are not conducive to comparative study. Comparisons are tenuous at best due to the wide discrepancies between states and programs and multiple variables affecting each curriculum implementation effort. Student achievement data reporting, likewise, varies from state-to-state and is not comparable with regard to reliability and validity.

This study is based on individualized outcomes and contextual issues which vary widely. The interview material is very subjective by nature and the inherent inability to quantify subjective responses to open-ended questions should be noted. Dialogue and deliberation is a valued and integral part of this type of research process and many outcomes are non-measurable. The analysis requires individualized description, on-going communication, and a focus on non-standardized quality measures; therefore, generalizations are very subjective and limited in scope.

Most importantly, the political reality of today is that of an ever-changing political process in which policies and programs appear, disappear, and change with alarmingly short notice and on a regular basis. As any one policy comes under scrutiny, major changes may have taken place within a very short timeframe. In spite of the shortcomings of an evaluative study of this type, there are many specific trends and generalizations that can be extracted from the data. Lessons can be learned from each individual case study.

*The Status of Civic Education and Trends  
Ascertained from the Study*

Several trends are apparent from the interviews, the document analysis, and the analysis of existing data. There are several specific characteristics that appear to be evident in multiple states and educational settings, but there are also larger issues that impact all programs systemically. The very nature of civics education concepts and the language of civic education policy create problems in and of themselves as some states may choose to define civic education in very global terms while other states may articulate very specific elements of narrow scope.

Identified issues that negatively impact high quality civic education include the condition in which a demanding amount of required subjects, topics, and standards across disciplines results in a very crowded curriculum. Teachers are often forced to make choices between curricular goals, all of which are compelling, important, and required. Civic education is often perceived as a nonessential subject.

In the large majority of states surveyed, it was clear that assessments drive the curriculum and, for most states, civic education testing is not mandatory. In addition, civic education is difficult to assess as the subject is very conceptual in nature and is problematic in standardized assessment reporting. In most states, the civics standards are not stand alone and, therefore, are difficult to assess separately. Across the states, there is general agreement that limited funding, professional development, and resources are problematic.

In many cases, there is a lack of adequate instructional time and/or opportunities for interdisciplinary approaches within a classroom or a school. This discourages teachers from developing meaningful lessons that can be reinforced across the curriculum and from using content-specific lessons to reinforce skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Team teaching for cross-discipline synthesis is not a common occurrence.

Many states report a preponderance of local control, but little or no overall state oversight. State policy can be an important foundation on which to

build civic education programs but with no central authority that is willing to accept the responsibility of maintaining an effective accountability system, little implementation can be expected on a larger scale. In some states, the state political structure can be an impediment in adjusting or changing current policy in civic education, particularly when a state system tends to shift programs to local control or has no mechanisms in place for review and evaluation of existing state programs.

All of the aforementioned issues result from three critical conditions on which curriculum development and implementation is commonly based and from which the problems stem. The first condition is one of disconnected components of standards-based instruction that are implemented unevenly or without an overall systemic plan in place. The social, educational, and political costs of random implementation efforts are a reflection of the lack of coordinated standards-based components such as well designed standards, multiple measures of assessment, informed instruction, feedback and continuous improvement loops, clear purpose, systematized oversight, and adequate resources.

A second set of circumstances lies within the civic education discipline itself. Civic education is far more than a set of knowledge-based facts or information. Civic education, by its very nature, is conceptual in nature and requires skills far beyond memorization and recall. This type of learning is not conducive to standardized testing or simple single score reporting formats.

A final condition exists in that there is a lack of a standardized set of indicators on which to index student learning in civic education. There is no agreement either among states or even within most states on how to assess the needs, gaps, and implementation levels assessed at a state or local level that will accommodate overall improvement in the field.

*The Nature of Civic Education  
as a Discipline*



Professional educators have long been taught John Dewey's vision on the purpose of schools which is to impart civic values and emphasize the art of doing and learning and accomplishing. Students should gain a sense of efficacy as they learned how to become active, contributing citizens in society and, in doing so, should actively engage in civic activities as informed citizens. Civic education must be part of "systematic teaching" (Patrick, 2000, p. 3) with clear purpose and oversight.

Civic education must be a deliberate, intentional curricular goal and not a happenstance by-product of other curricula. It is clear that ". . . civic and political learning are not innate, but the result of conscious and ongoing work by educators" (Battistoni, 2000, p. 30) which underscores the importance of developing a powerful curriculum around citizenship skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. "The idea of teaching deliberative democracy. . . assumes that people are capable of becoming public actors who can deliberate together, make sound choices, and take responsibility for their communities and the nation" (Peng, 2000, p. 75).

Among civic education and social studies specialists, there is broad recognition of the inappropriateness of standardized testing in the typical selected response (multiple choice) format to measure student learning in civic education concepts and yet this type of testing is the basis on which resources and policy decisions are based. The testing system itself is structured to measure information that is two dimensional, correct and non-correct. This is not an accurate measure of actual learning and certainly not a measure of a student's ability to apply, synthesize, and evaluate knowledge.

Civic education, on the other hand, is best taught through interactive, dialectic activities that encourage students to examine current events and democratic principles through discussion, questioning strategies, debate, and thoughtful analysis of the issues.

Public deliberation is one name for the way people go about deciding how to act. In weighing--together--the costs and consequences of various approaches to

solving problems, people become aware of the differences in the way others see those costs and consequences. That enables them to find courses of action that are consistent with what is valuable to the community as a whole. In that way, the public can define the public's interests--issue by issue. (Mathews & McAfee, as cited by Iara Peng, 2000, p. 75).

Civil discourse and open debate are hallmarks of a strong and vigorous democracy. The skill of developing profound questioning strategies is vitally important in civic responsibility and civic awareness. It has become increasingly obvious that there must be recognition of the difficulty in today's world in differentiating between factual information and non-information. Opinion is offered as fact at all levels of government and the media has found a lucrative market in selling emotional response to news items and current issues. We put our students at a great disadvantage in not providing opportunities to explore these sources of information as well as analyze and evaluate what they are hearing, reading, seeing, and discussing. A healthy skepticism is a skill worth cultivating and can be used to encourage research, fact finding, multiple perspectives, and reflection.

Civic education is critical in the inclusive curriculum due to the unique nature of the content that is so conducive to teaching higher level thinking skills on real life issues. A sound and deliberate curriculum in civic education should include "intellectual understanding," "communication and problem solving," "civic judgment and imagination" (Battistoni, 2000, pp. 34-38). Iara Peng (2000) has outlined eight essential skills in a deliberative democracy that include:

- (a) listening carefully to others;
- (b) developing a public way to talk about problems;
- (c) naming and framing an issue for public deliberation;
- (d) engaging with, understanding, and getting a handle on complex issues;
- (e) using deliberation to make decisions;
- (f) including the voices of people who are not in the room before taking action;
- (g) identifying the general, common, or public

interest; and (h) reaching a reasonable, considered judgment about how to deal with an issue. (pp. 78-81)

But the complexity of developing the strategies in a systematized curriculum is far from easy and it is not incidental to the education program as a whole. Researchers from the Center for Democracy and Governance Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research with the U. S. Agency for International Development, as quoted by Dr. Margaret Branson, tells us that,

. . . course design and the quality of instruction are critical to the success of civic education programs. If civic education programs are well-designed and well taught, if they meet frequently, use participatory methods, stress learning by doing, and focus on issues that have direct relevance to participants' daily lives, they can have a significant, positive impact on democratic participation and attitudes. (Branson, 2004a)

Curriculum development, teaching strategies, and assessment need to reflect the important learning objectives of high quality civic education (Appendix D).

There is no question that well-designed interactive methods demand more of both teachers and students than a steady diet of 'lecture-read-recite.' If our goal is to educate the young so they become competent, committed and caring democratic citizens, then we need to use interactive methods that are most likely to help us achieve that goal. (Branson, 2004a)

Schools certainly provide the appropriate venue for imparting and developing skills of civic understanding, civil discourse, and civic participation. "Teaching and encouraging the development of civic skills and attitudes among young people have long been recognized as important goals of education" (Carnegie Corporation, 2003). More specifically, "It is schools that provide

that unique environment to balance the development of individuality, autonomy, confidence, and knowledge with the strengthening of the public self through dialogue (including dialogue with adults), decision-making, and cooperative learning" (Battistoni, 2000, p. 30). "The more we engage in narrow or rhetorical definitions of service and citizenship, the more we may turn away young people. This calls at once for all disciplines, which may have equally effective conceptual frameworks, to join into the discourse around a multidisciplinary civic education" (Battistoni, 2000, p. 33).

*The Structure of Standards-Based  
Accountability Systems*

Standards-based instruction (standards-assessment-accountability) operates best when each component is developed not as an end or singular product, but part of an on-going, interactive process. Standards are critical to an effective standards-based curriculum delivery system but need to be understood not as a constant, but rather, more as a component in a dynamic system which requires on-going attention, review, and feedback in order to maintain viability in the educational system of today. Unfortunately, that is often not the case. More often, the standards can be found to be a quagmire of information bytes without clarity of the goals of education and citizenship. Fortunately, we have examples of exceptional standards that may avoid some of this,<sup>18</sup> but the problem remains that civics standards as stand alone or as a component that is easily disaggregated from history and social studies is rarely found among the state adopted standards.

Assessment in civic education is essential in establishing a place in the curriculum. Although effective assessment methods in civic education remain an issue as long as standardized testing methods are the

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<sup>18</sup> See examples of standards in the Michigan Curriculum Framework/Social Studies or the Learning Standards for Social Studies of New York for models of conceptual standards that incorporate higher level thinking skills across grade levels.

exclusive means for assessing student learning, only a portion of civic knowledge can be measured through the selected response (multiple choice) assessment. State required assessments in civic education would encourage educators at all grade levels to pay attention to the acquisition and development of students' learning in civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Students benefit well when civic education, as well as all other disciplines, are part of an integrated curriculum which assists in developing an understanding of the connections between subjects, cognitive skills, career preparation, and life skills. Civic education is effective as an organizing structure through which written and verbal expression, as well as reading and listening skills, can be developed, practiced, and mastered. Most importantly, students have the opportunity, through civic education, to apply civic concepts and democratic ideals to real-life situations. Effective civic education requires students to evaluate information, participate in group discussions and civil discourse, consider multiple perspectives, understand the importance of fact-finding and research, utilize good decision-making practice, and develop cohesive points of view that are supported by accurate information.

The greatest challenge facing our teachers today is the issue of lack of time to adequately teach all that is required. Decades of calls for school reform have resulted in few structural changes to the school day and the school calendar. Standards-based account-ability requires exceptional amounts of time for testing, analyzing testing information, and in many cases, individualizing instruction. Although integration of subject matter is clearly one strategy in addressing the time and inclusiveness issue, school structures are not designed to accommodate common preparation periods for multidisciplinary planning or allotting time within the teacher contract day for collaboration. The question of how to maintain a viable curriculum in all subjects including civic education is not taken into consideration when the testing systems frequently are designed to be one dimensional, subject-skill specific without an opportunity to expand subject matter for

inclusiveness. Reading and writing on questions of democratic principles, constitutional issues, civic responsibilities, and current events could easily be a strategy that addresses integration of subjects and skills at all grade levels but multiple choice testing is not the most effective method to measure civic disposition, attitude, application, and evaluative skills.

*Policy as a Foundation for  
Building Systemic Change*

Across the nation, state policies and statutes are full of profundity and lofty language, but provide very little direction or prescription as to application and practical use for the classroom teacher in teaching students on how to become an integral and contributing member in participatory democracy. In spite of our quest for a more specific set of clear objectives and classroom strategies, perhaps the policy language is best left as guiding principle and the operational language is better developed through curriculum frameworks, standards, course outlines, benchmarks, and assessments. The problem lies less in the nature of the language which can be characterized as anything from esoteric rhetoric to profoundly inspirational but more in the issue of what follows from the policy itself.

Policy as position papers, resolutions, or statements have been denigrated as only so much lip service not because of the policy itself, but due more to the lack of follow-through with successive corresponding mandates, statutes, or laws. It requires the muscle of a strong accountability system to ensure that the intent of the policy is developed, implemented, supported, and held accountable to an oversight agency or body. The policy is only the first step in program planning and development.

Policy development itself requires the strength of individuals, often in the form of coalitions or advocacy groups, to maintain the impetus of an emerging issue and see it through the development process. Maintaining the integrity of the policy itself requires ongoing communication and provision for checks and balances

throughout the process of policy inception to policy implementation. A transparent process with minimal amounts of invisible lobbying helps to avoid pitfalls of disparate contingents who may undermine the efforts along the way. On the other hand, examples of personality-driven programs and policy that have led to effective and exemplary implementation efforts are apparent in many cases.

Policy development, like curriculum development, is best achieved through a systems approach that includes mechanisms for input, review, revision, and evaluation. The economics of any given situation, and certainly in education, will most definitely affect the policy adoption process, the implementation, and the accountability but fiscal resources need not be a barrier to laying the foundation. Policy development needs to take the economics of the proposed policy change into account to allow for adequate resource allocation but it need not preclude policy adoption. Nonetheless, if civic education is to be required, developed, and assessed, it is important that adequate resources be appropriated. The predetermined outcomes of civic education implementation require adequate time for fact-finding, public deliberation, and scholarly input to ensure a high quality program adoption. Effective policy that has solicited the expertise of those in the field, among policymakers, and within the discipline, will have a higher success rate at the implementation stage and in fiscal procurement.<sup>19</sup>

Resolutions and policy adoptions do not necessarily translate into implementation but certainly there is an advantage in that policy opens the door through which action might occur. Policy development is a critical first step in program development, program vitality, and continuous improvement. Civic education implementation will benefit from strong policy that sets the stage

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<sup>19</sup> For more information on policy development systems, see "Institutional Rational Choice: An Assessment of the Institutional Analysis and Development Framework" by Elinor Ostrom in *Theories of the Policy Process* (edited by Paul A. Sabatier, 1999, Boulder, CO: Westview Press).

for curriculum development, resource allocation, and reclamation of the appropriate place in school purpose.

### *Conclusions and Evaluative Summary*

The strength of any given state policy is reflected in the implementation and student achievement levels, but in and of itself, state policy is insufficient in bringing about the type of school refocusing that is advocated by the Civic Mission of Schools movement. Curriculum focus areas in a standards-based instructional system require mandated assessments, clear curricular goals or specific standards, and adequate resource allocation. Interview, survey data, and web-based resources indicate that the current status of history-social science education is in decline, while professionals and scholars in civic education recognize the urgent need to revitalize civic education in response to a disengaged youth and a decreasing sense of efficacy among the general populace.

Effective state policy is that which is supported with mechanisms for progressive and ongoing implementation resources and structures. States which utilize teacher focus groups, provide professional development opportunities, and maintain a specific focus on civic education through testing have the advantage of building a system that is self-correcting, dynamic, and continuously improving. Overall, there is a need to promote systemic review of state curricula with a clear purpose of assessing the civic education delivery system within each state, district, and school.

Some systems appear to be more personality-driven rather than policy-driven, but even those who move the civic education agenda forward have had the advantage of support from state documents and official communiqués.<sup>20</sup> Individuals with civic education background tend to have a deep and comprehensive understanding about the goals,

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<sup>20</sup> The resolution adopted by the National Governors Association in support of civic education is described in chapter 4 and is available on the web at <http://www.nga.org/nga/legislativeUpdate/>



objectives, and delivery system of high quality civic education, but there is less general awareness of the components of an effective civic education program among the educational community at large. Even more distressing is the lack of constructive models in which schools have successfully integrated skills and content to create a curriculum that centers on citizenship education. Nevertheless, concentrated efforts garner results. Personalities that drive statewide initiatives are characterized by clear purpose, vision, and goals that coalesce in mobilization efforts and sustained progress in moving ahead the civic education agenda. A common vision to this end is to ensure that schools maintain the civic mission purpose as a central focus in curricula, school culture, and resource allocation.

The strength of any given civic education policy alone is insufficient in assuring high quality civic education implementation and increased student achievement. Systemic support and stakeholder understanding of civic education purpose and goals are critical. Other variables that support implementation levels include individuals who support and drive the civic education agenda, adequate resource allocation, school structures that allow for integration of subject matter, and professional development. In this climate of school budget cut backs and single-focus academics, it is important that we remind ourselves and the public at large of the essential purpose of public schooling as we teach democracy and democratic principles anew to each generation.

The recommendations to the field and for further study that follow are intended to summarize the findings in a proactive, advocacy format for educational leaders, scholars, and policymakers. The literature supporting each of the recommendations is abundant and each recommendation is supported by the findings of this study.

*Practical Implications and Recommendations  
to the Field: Essential Conditions for  
Optimal Implementation of Civic Education*

Practical implications and recommendations to the field are based on essential conditions for optimal implementation of civic education. These conditions are as follows:

1. Universal recognition of the need to focus attention on civic education as a central focus of schools today for the purpose of maintaining a healthy democracy and a dynamic relationship between the institutions of a democratic nation and the involvement of an active citizenry.

2. Assessment of civic education at all grade levels, establishing a core place in the curriculum--the civics data must be able to be disaggregated from social science, history, and other related disciplines.

3. Promotion of systematic review of state curricula (i.e., standards, statutes, accountability) through a dynamic systems approach that allows for input from the field, evaluation of program effectiveness, and opportunities for review, revision, and on-going improvement.

4. Well-articulated state policy to set the foundation of a comprehensive system of review in how schools are meeting civic mission responsibilities through student learning, resource allocation, and program effectiveness.

5. NAEP results, particularly in civics, continue to be assessed at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels and the data be made available in a state-by-state format for comparison of civic education progress. Results of national data through IEA should be tailored for more accessible use by state and local interests.

6. Development of an indexing system for accountability, program appraisal, and curriculum delivery in civic education that may be applied in inter-state as well as intra-state studies.

7. Allocation of resources should include consideration of teacher time for collaboration and planning, multiple measures of assessment, professional development opportunities, and review of high quality curricular materials in civic education.

8. State websites be evaluated for user-friendly accessibility to all testing data, including social

science and civic education. State data in the social sciences should be disaggregated as the tests usually include more than one discipline tested (e.g., history, geography, government, civics, world cultures, economics).

9. Promotion of integrated curriculum in which civic education is a vehicle for teaching reading, writing, verbal expression, listening, cognitive skills, and participatory skills at all grade levels.

10. Identification of promising practices in civic education (e.g., service learning, National Issues Forum, discussion of current events, student involvement, increased student voice) need to continue and the information be made available to teachers, school administrators, and policymakers.

11. State, district, and school curricula review include consideration of exceptional curricular materials (such as those available from the Center for Civic Education and the Constitutional Rights Foundation) and reference the *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Center for Civic Education, 1994) in civic education program development.

12. Increased national attention and support for civic education to encourage state efforts in developing effective curriculum, accountability systems, and comparable measures of the delivery system in educating for democracy.

#### *Recommendations for Further Studies*

In spite of the proliferation of literature and scholarly study of civic education in recent years, there remains a great deal of opportunity for further study. It is important to keep in mind the importance of connecting civic education to existing standards-based structures and understand the importance of dynamic systems that adapt and adjust to the multiple manifestations of state education policy.

For future research, there exists the opportunity to explore the development of an effective indexing of civic education curriculum delivery systems and all the components therein. Each component would need to be examined through quantitative, as well as qualitative

data in areas such as comparative curricular programs, the effect of teacher attitude and motivation, comparative assessment methodology, quantitative student achievement measures, and the effect of professional development.

Interstate comparisons should continue to be conducted but the development of an index that would measure implementation components would enlighten educators as to effective practices, programs, and materials. Using the same strategy, intrastate comparisons should continue to be undertaken to identify effective model programs, schools, and curricula that support a civic education focus. Effective civic education resources and programs that support student learning should continue to withstand scrutiny and review. Correlational studies between civic education and student achievement in core subjects should continue to be undertaken and data on post-secondary civic involvement continue to be collected, analyzed, and used as the basis for improved civic education programs. Most of all, there remains a great deal of work in the field of civic education assessment systems that measure levels of civic knowledge, cognitive skill attainment, and application of civic education through participatory activities and civic engagement.

In addressing civic education issues, delivery systems, and student learning, we as a nation benefit the most. It is our civic responsibility to continue to call for effective civic education for all of our students in all of our schools at all grade levels in a never-ending chorus for each generation now and into the future.

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**

**INDEX OF STATE POLICY ON CIVIC EDUCATION**

## Index of State Policy on Civic Education

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
State Standards	Civics is not mentioned	Civics is mentioned but remains inconsequential to the overall purpose or instruction	Civics is mentioned but plays a minor role to the overall purpose or instruction	Civic education is given a somewhat important priority in the curriculum	Civic education is a critical and central component of the instruction
State Assessments	No assessment	Civics may be mentioned but with little or no impact	Minor role in the overall assessment system	Civics is tested as a component of the system	Civic education is assessed thoroughly and results are reported separately

## Index of State Policy on Civic Education (continued).

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Graduation Requirements	None	Very small part of other requirements	A part of other requirements	Specific civics requirement for partial year	Specific civics requirement for full year
State Statutes or Laws	None	Civics may be mentioned but remains inconsequential to the overall purpose or instruction	Civics may be mentioned but plays a minor role to the overall purpose or instruction	Civic education is required to be given a somewhat important priority in the curriculum	Civic education is required to be a critical and central component of the instruction

## Index of State Policy on Civic Education (continued).

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
State Framework or Similar Document that addressed Civic Education	None	Civics may be mentioned but remains inconsequential to the overall purpose or instruction	Civics may be mentioned but is a minor component in the document	Civic education is addressed as an important and separate topic in the document	Civic Education is addressed as a critical and central curriculum with strong documented support
Other Related Policies or Statements	None	Civics may be mentioned but remains inconsequential to the overall purpose or instruction	Civics may be mentioned but plays a minor role to the overall purpose or instruction	Civic education is required to be given a somewhat important priority in the curriculum	Civic education is required to be a critical and central component of the instruction

**APPENDIX B**  
**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT INDEX**

## Student Achievement Index

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
NAEP	Below basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
State assessments (state average)	0%-25%	26%-50%	51%-75%	76%-100%
Nationally-normed assessments (state average)	1 <sup>st</sup> Quartile	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quartile	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile	4 <sup>th</sup> Quartile



**APPENDIX C**

**CIVIC EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL INDEX**

## Civic Education Implementation Level Index

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Curriculum Specialists Commentary (inter-views)	Little or no civic education implementation	Some acknowledgement and implementation but relatively very minor	Civics is a part of the curriculum but plays a minor role to the overall purpose or instruction or other subjects	Civic education is given a somewhat important priority in the curriculum	Civic education is a critical and central component of the instruction
Survey Data (quantitative)	Little or no civic education implementation	Some acknowledgement and implementation but relatively very minor	Civics is a part of the curriculum but plays a minor role to the overall purpose or instruction or other subjects	Civic education is given a somewhat important priority in the curriculum	Civic education is a critical and central component of the instruction

## Civic Education Implementation Level Index

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Survey Commentary (open-ended questions on surveys)	Little or no civic education implementati on	Some acknowledgem ent and implementa- tion, but relatively very minor	Civics is a part of the curriculum but plays a minor role to the overall purpose or instruction or other subjects	Civic education is given a somewhat important priority in the curriculum	Civic education is a critical and central component of the instruct- tion

## Index of State Policy on Civic Education (continued).

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Other Reports or Commentary (inter-views, articles, or data)	Little or no civic education implementation	Some acknowledgement and implementation, but relatively very minor	Civics is a part of the curriculum, but plays a minor role to the overall purpose or instruction or other subjects	Civic education is given a somewhat important priority in the curriculum	Civic education is a critical and central component of the instruction

APPENDIX D  
INDICATORS OF HIGH QUALITY CIVIC  
EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

INDICATORS OF HIGH QUALITY CIVIC  
EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

State Level

1. Preparation of students to be effective citizens is explicitly recognized as an important part of the overall goals of the educational system at all grade levels from kindergarten through Grade 12 and beyond.

2. The directive from the central authority is distinctly a mission of citizenship education, the cultural heritage of a constitutional democracy, and civic understanding of the historical, philosophical, and social foundations of a pluralistic society.

3. There is a systematic and continual emphasis on teaching and learning knowledge of democracy, democratic government, and democratic society through high quality curriculum, interactive instructional strategies, and teacher preparation.

4. The standards and approved curricula are based on the strands of civic competence that include civic-related content knowledge, cognitive-intellectual skills, participation skills, and civic dispositions that serve as motivations for behavior, values, and attitudes.

5. Provisions are made for adequate professional development and teacher preparation time through resource allocation and opportunity.

District and School Level

1. Civic knowledge, skills, dispositions, and values are taught explicitly and systematically at every grade level.

2. Development of the concept of civic virtue and the behavioral dispositions of the good citizen in a democracy are critical elements of a strong citizenship education.

3. School culture exemplifies and demonstrates core democratic values.

4. Students at every grade level are provided with opportunities to participate in the civic life of their school and community.

5. Learning activities extend beyond the school and invite parent and the community to participate and work with students.

6. Preparation of students for effective citizenship is explicitly recognized as an important part of the school mission.

Classroom Level

1. Classroom culture exemplifies and demonstrates core democratic values and principles.

2. Citizenship education is integrated throughout and across the curriculum.

3. Teacher-led discussion of current events and issues in an open classroom is a regular event.

4. Students are provided with opportunities to participate in simulations, service-learning projects, organized debate, conflict resolution programs, and other activities that encourage the application of civic knowledge, skills, and values.

5. Students are provided with instruction on the nation's founding documents, civic institutions, and political processes.

6. Students are provided with instruction on the people, history, and traditions that have shaped our local communities, our nation, and the world.

Student Learning Goals

Students will:

1. Understand and be able to apply knowledge of the Constitution, the philosophical foundations of democracy, and the institutions of democracy;
2. Embrace core democratic values and strive to live by them;
3. Be aware of issues and events that have an impact on people at local, state, national, and global levels;
4. Seek information from varied sources and perspectives to develop informed opinions and creative solutions;
5. Use effective decision-making and problem-solving skills;
6. Be able to evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues of ethical, social, political, and cultural importance;
7. Actively participate in civic and community life;
8. Be able to analyze and evaluate information and ideas through questioning strategies, communication, and reflection;

#### Indicators of High Quality Civic Education Resources

1. Content knowledge includes primary sources, printed materials, media, related literature, and student-friendly texts in the cultural heritage of constitutional democracy, civic concepts, philosophical foundations, and geo-political issues of a global community.
2. Cognitive-intellectual skills and participation skills are an integral part of the citizenship education curriculum and, as such, are inseparable from content.
3. Lessons provide opportunities for students to participate in simulations, service-learning projects, conflict resolution programs, and other activities that encourage the application of civic knowledge, skills, and values.
4. Resources provide opportunities for students to evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues of ethical, social, political, and cultural importance.
5. Resources encourage students to analyze and evaluate information and ideas through questioning strategies, communication, and reflection.



6. Resources encourage development of civic virtue and the behavioral dispositions of the good citizen in a democracy.

7. The classroom applications provide a systematic and continual emphasis on teaching and learning knowledge of democracy, democratic government, and democratic society through high quality curriculum, interactive instructional strategies, and teacher preparation.

*Compiled from documents from the Center for Civic Education, the Constitutional Rights Foundation, National Council for the Social Studies, and the CIRCLE Report. Special appreciation is extended to Charles Quigley, John J. Patrick, and Margaret S. Branson.*

**APPENDIX E**  
**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

## Interview Questions

1. How specific are the state standards in regard to civic education? Are the standards separate or embedded in History-Social Science standards? Please elaborate.

2. Is civic education assessed in your state? If so, how does this affect implementation levels of the curriculum? Please elaborate.

3. How is policy for civic education and/or history-social science developed at the state level? How does state policy influence the implementation of civic education, specifically as assessed, monitored, or regulated?

4. Are there state policies that effectively support implementation of higher quality civic education?

5. Does higher quality civic education support higher student achievement in your state?

6. How are teachers motivated or rewarded for increased civic education implementation levels in your state?

7. In your opinion, how effective is your state policy in the development and delivery of high quality civic education curriculum? How is this reflected in student learning outcomes?

**APPENDIX F**  
**INTERVIEW NOTES**

## Interview Notes

### CALIFORNIA

#### Background

California adopted state History-Social Science standards in 1998 for grades kindergarten through 12. Although strands of political science, geography, economics, and government/civics are intended to be incorporated within the standards, history is, by far, the main focus at all grade levels from 4<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>. A one semester course of government/civics is taught at Grade 12. Intellectual reasoning skills are identified for K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 in three domains that include chronological and spatial thinking; research, evidence, and point of view; and historical interpretation.

State tests on the history-social science standards are administered at Grades 8, 10, and 11. The test does not distinguish or disaggregate data on civic knowledge from other social science content.

The History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools (2001) provides a thorough guide in developing a high quality history-social science curriculum with descriptions and examples of effective instructional strategies and sound intellectual development practices. There is no systemic professional development or teacher preparation program that requires or encourages teachers to incorporate these models into classroom instruction.

State statutes and education codes address citizenship education (§ 32280), course requirements for graduation (§ 51225.3), textbook adoption regulations (§ 60043), and some required components of history and government instruction (§ 51230).

The secondary school accreditation process currently is the sole source of civic education implementation oversight at a state level although civic

education, per se, is not a specified component of the accrediting program as it now exists.

California has established the California Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools as a state-wide initiative of civic education leaders from various organizations and public education for the purpose of organizing and promoting effective civic education efforts in all schools at all grade levels.

### Interview Notes

Interview with John Burns, Consultant, California Department of Education (July 27, 2004).

The correlation between civic education and the voting rate is interesting and impressive. This underscores the importance of civic education in maintaining a healthy democracy. As far as California standards that are specific to civic education, "the grade level standards in grades Kindergarten through Grade 11 are not very specific." The one-semester government course at Grade 12 is based on standards that reflect standard textbook content. In spite of the lack of specificity in the standards, there are many broad-based concepts and themes so that "teachers and administrators can build on what's there." The unfortunate issue for public schools is that there is "not enough time" to accomplish all that is expected.

There is very little disagreement that civic education is desirable or even necessary. Schools need to be preparing our children to effectively assume their "role as future citizens." The problems lie in the delivery. When the question becomes "civic education versus health education versus reading," the problem is more complex. Unfortunately, what is needed is not always provided by the public school system as it now exists. To look at the problem in the larger perspective, the current public school system is "essentially an 18<sup>th</sup> century system attempting to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century." Policy, at this time, tends to be more of a "band aid" approach that attempts to fix

problems within existing structures while the system itself continues to exacerbate the problems.

A large part of the policy issue is also a result of some systemic structures around which the policy-makers must work. The first problem lies in the legislated term limits. Lawmakers are often in and out of office with an insufficient amount of time to develop a clear understanding of educational issues. A second problem lies in the bureaucracy itself, particularly in the Department of Education, in that civil service positions are often "handed to political appointees," thus neglecting to fill jobs with the most highly qualified. Both of these conditions contribute to a large middle management contingent that tends to view issues primarily through "short-term" perspectives and long-term planning is minimal.

Political polarization and party politics have encroached upon the ability to move forward in a progressive manner, particularly in education. Leadership is not strong within entities such as the California Department of Education and there is more "attention to past doctrines rather than the future of the state." In addition, government typically operates from "one crisis to another" with little time or resources devoted to developing an "understanding of the problems that arise" either in scope, causation, or contributing factors. The large bureaucracy, or "convoluted system," has contributed to "no clear authority" and the question of "Who's in charge?" becomes a complex issue.

To illustrate how this plays out in the California Department of Education, there is "bifurcated authority" to which each office is responsible. There is considerable attention that must be paid to the departments of finance and the departments of personnel yet it's possible that various policy requirements may be in conflict. Even in the school accountability system, there are limitations from multiple sources such as the legislature, the State Board of Education, existing policy and regulations, as well as from the Governor's

office and other high profile politicians. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jack O'Connell, "understands the limitations in which he can operate" and this makes it difficult to generate new broad-based policies that would interface with existing policies, programs, and agendas.

In education in California, assessment drives the curriculum. The civic standards that are unique to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade civics class are not assessed. Although there is foundational civic knowledge and content embedded in the standards at other grades, the lack of specific civic education assessments and the inability to disaggregate the civic knowledge assessment scores from the grade level tests make it difficult to appraise student achievement levels in civic education in California.

The California Department of Education provides minimal direction or support for professional development programs and, in civic education, there is virtually no official state support. The emphasis on low-performing schools, as measured primarily by reading and math, has left civic education with no visible support for professional development but, overall, there is very little time or funding for professional development in general, leaving the situation in the hands of the individual districts.

Assessment in civic education leaves many unanswered questions due to the nature of the discipline. What is the most effective measurement? Multiple choice tests may measure civic knowledge, to some extent, but it cannot measure civic participation such as future voting. In addition, the large diversity issue in California also creates a challenge in that various cultures bring differing perceptions in how government is viewed. Accurate assessment instruments need to account for cultural discrepancies, particularly on questions that are more complex or interpretive.

Overall state history-social science assessment data seem to yield results that show California is



"holding ground" at middle and high school but reports from the field seem to indicate that fewer schools are teaching history-social science at the elementary levels due to the lack of testing in grades Kindergarten through Grade 7. There is "an erosion of history-social science" due, in part, to the neglect of *No Child Left Behind* to include the discipline in the required accountability measures but also due to perceptions that history-social science in general, and civic education in particular, are "not important" skills to teach in the school setting.

State history-social science organizations and agencies have collaborated to pool resources and promote the discipline through the political arena which appears to be more effective than scholarly documents. At this point, there appears to be little actual movement on the part of any agency or state entity in moving the civic education agenda forward in a definitive direction although many collaborative committees and organizations are working hard to continue to address the issue on many fronts.

State Policy Rating Index (Levels 1-5): CALIFORNIA

State Standards - 3  
State Assessments - 3.5  
Graduation Requirements - 4  
State Statutes and Laws - 4  
State Frameworks or similar document(s) - 4  
Other Related Policies or Statements - 3.6

## IDAHO

### Background

Idaho requires three social studies courses for high school graduation, including a 12<sup>th</sup> grade government course. The state standards are organized by themes or "instructional blocks" for three grade level clusters (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) that include civic education concepts such as "Evolution of Democracy," "Foundations of the American Political System," "Organization and Formation of the American System of Government," and "Citizen Responsibilities and Rights" in grades kindergarten through Grade 5. The middle grades curriculum includes the Grades K-5 themes but also includes "Organization and Formation of the American System of Government." The secondary curriculum again includes the same instructional block themes and adds "Civic Life, Politics, and Government" and "U.S. Foreign Affairs" among others. Idaho has a strong "Character Education" emphasis that reinforces and supports the fundamental components of civic education.

Character education has been a mainstay in the school culture in Idaho and the concepts are very compatible with the civic education effort in Idaho. As such, civic education concepts have been integrated into many areas of the curriculum, including history-social science and citizenship education. Students participate in learning activities that focus on respect, compassion, caring, accepting responsibility, and moral character.

### Interview Notes

Interview with Dr. Dan Prinzing, Coordinator Curriculum Materials and Social Studies, Idaho Department of Education, (July 27, 2004) and currently, Director of School Partner-ships, Boise State University, Boise, Idaho.

Idaho was "late in the standards movement." The state has "exit standards" for Grades 9-12 that are

based on the graduation requirements of economics, government, and U. S. History. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade Government class is considered the "capstone class." These exit standards are "backed down" to grades Kindergarten through 8. Because of this Kindergarten through Grade 12 process, there is a strong civics/government theme.

The state has assumed a stronger role, recently, in curriculum development. Idaho has identified "power standards" and concepts or themes are more developed at each grade level. For example, "What is a rule?" is taught in the early grades.

While Idaho still has no required history-social science classes at the elementary level, there is now a suggested 8<sup>th</sup> grade course that can be developed as an "exploratory" course such as in exploring Idaho through geography, economic, and other analytical tools of the social scientist. Project Citizen, a service learning curriculum for middle grade students in public policy, is commonly incorporated into the 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum, although it is not mandated. In the past, "teachers used to be all over" the curriculum map in delivering history-social science instruction, but the full K-12 sequence that has been adopted by the state has clearly brought structure and coherence to the curriculum.

Recognizing the importance of intentional civic education, schools will now be required to document the levels of civic education at each school site. Beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, each building principal will be responding to a new question on the annual school accreditation report that asks what the school is doing to foster civic education, particularly targeting Grades 5, 8, and 12. A rubric on which the administrator will rate civic education at the school will define basic, proficient, and advanced proficient levels of engagement at the targeted Grades of 5, 8, and 12, although all grades are expected to support the goals of civic education. Site visits and school awards are based on the accreditation report as a whole. This is a huge step forward in the accountability movement

and a positive step toward ensuring civic education implementation.

Social studies is often taught as part of the reading curriculum through trade books (e.g., *Rock the Box* and corresponding lessons). The goal, according to Dr. Prinzing, is to have four titles for each grade level at grades kindergarten through Grade 3. The themes for these grade levels are "Myself" at kindergarten, "Family" at first grade, "Neighborhood" at Grade 2, and "Community" at Grade 3.

Students study Idaho history at Grade 4 and United States history at Grade 5. An emphasis on geography is the focus of the western hemisphere world history course and the eastern hemisphere world history course at Grades 6 and 7, respectively. An activity based "exploratory" course at Grade 8 includes studies on the state of Idaho, citizenship, and application of social science concepts from kindergarten through Grade 7.

At the high school level, students embark on studies that begin with a world history overview, "Plato to NATO," in thematic units such as "Human Rights" at the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Two years of consecutive United States History is covered at Grades 10 and 11 and one semester each of economics and government is required at Grade 12.

The state policies that support this organized and well-defined curriculum are not evident as outlined in state statutes, per se, but rather through documents developed through the Idaho Department of Education. Under the direction of Dr. Dan Prinzing, State Coordinator of Social Science, teacher committees were organized to develop units of study, or "instructional blocks," that organized and "re-clustered" the standards in a "teacher-friendly form." The department has a packet of assessments, developed by teachers in a project that was coordinated through the Idaho State Department of Education.

Beginning with the standards, the teachers developed activities, vocabulary, adaptable articulation

strategies to other subjects, and suggested resource lists by grade levels. "Power standards" were identified using "endurance and longevity" as a criteria. Teachers examined the overall products for "vertical articulation" which would support the scaffolding of skills and knowledge built from grade to grade. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade economics and government classes would be the "capstone" course for the kindergarten through Grade 12 social science curriculum. This "suggested scope and sequence" came to be commonly requested by the school districts and, for the most part, districts adopted all suggested documents and grade level scope and sequence curricula. Over the course of 4 years, standards were written, adopted, and supported with grade level-specific courses of study.

This process has been far more of a "back door approach" to keep social studies "on the plate." The Idaho Education Code states that "all standards will be assessed" although civic education, specifically, is not listed on the state assessment requirements and, in fact, the Idaho Student Achievement Test (ISAT) only tests science, reading, and math. Instead, accountability for History-Social Science has effectively been developed around the required school report card that serves as an important data collection source for schools in Idaho. Taking language from the Idaho Education Code (33-1612), civics education has been defined as a critical factor, or focus, in curricular goals, thus justifying a place for civics education on the school accountability report card. With the specific inclusion of civics education as part of the annual accountability report card to which all school administrators must respond, greater attention has been generated in providing civics education and ensuring that the history-social science curriculum maintain a civics education focus. According to Prinzing, "Civics receives support from all factions." It is "a uniting goal" in that all schools strive "to create caring and competent citizens." Most of all, it was the synergy of bringing teachers together to develop the power standards and curriculum resources that helped to create a strong professional learning community of

history-social science teachers and a sense of professionalism within the discipline.

Educational oversight in Idaho is in the hands of the Idaho State Board of Education that consists of six members appointed by the governor. The State Superintendent of Schools, an elected position, also has a vote on the board. A "contentious relationship" is often reflected in the voting pattern which is frequently a six-to-one with the State Superintendent as the odd vote. The state school evaluation system is based on an accountability plan "report card" to which each school site principal must respond. Further accountability is established through site visit teams that visit each school twice in every 6-year period.

The accountability system in Idaho is comparable to "spokes on a wheel" in which standards, the accreditation process, teacher preparation, and professional development support instructional alignment from standards to assessment. Through an articulated system of alignment and supporting structures for teacher participation, Idaho has "created a solid network of history-social science teachers" that support the system of on-going improvement and increased credibility for civics education within the existing curriculum structure. Workshops offered throughout the year and during the summer months allow teachers to increase their knowledge base and develop content-rich curriculum. This helped "to create the synergy" that drove the curriculum development into a meaningful, organized, and teacher-friendly program that is articulated from grade level to grade level with clear learning goals at each stage.

This system would not work without the inducement of connecting accountability measures to strong content and articulated curricular goals at each grade level. In large part, the system became a coordinated and articulated set of programs, professional development, and accountability not so much through a political oversight effort but more through the personality-driven efforts of Dr. Prinzing and his colleagues. In maintaining a system in which all

components are coordinated and supporting high quality social studies, as well as civic education, the effort required vigilance and strong program development oversight as each element of the accountability system was designed. Through perseverance, consistent effort, and a thoroughly professional approach to curriculum development, Dr. Prinzing was able to bring the development process full circle to the implementation level. Dr. Prinzing emphasized that in order to be effective, the system "had to become institutionalized" because "the players change so often" and education is, without question, "a political process."

State Policy Rating Index (Levels 1-5): IDAHO

State Standards - 5  
State Assessments - 2  
Graduation Requirements - 4  
State Statutes and Laws - 4  
State Frameworks or similar document(s) - 4  
Other Related Policies or Statements - 4  
Aggregate State Index - 3.8

## MARYLAND

### Background

The Social Studies standards in Maryland include a civics strand for grades Kindergarten through Grade 12. Beginning in 2007, all students will need to pass an end-of-the course exam in government to be eligible for high school graduation. A requirement for completion of 75 hours of service is also required to be determined at the discretion of the local districts.

Maryland has a "Voluntary State Curriculum" and the social studies standards are available for grades pre-K through Grade 8. The social studies standards are grouped in five strands (History, Geography, Economics, Political Science, and Peoples of the Nations and World). Civics standards in civic responsibility, civic participation are included under the political science standards and civic knowledge, i.e., historical development of fundamental concepts such as authority, power, influence, and democratic skills, is a part of the history standards.

### Interview Notes

Interview with Marcie Taylor-Thoma, Coordinator of Social Studies, Maryland State Department of Education (Monday, June 14, 2004).

Marcie Taylor-Thoma was a key individual in the design of Maryland's state standards and assessment program in social studies. The state standards were adopted in 2000, but the development of critical elements were developed long before the final stages of the standards adoption process. As early as 1992, Ms. Taylor-Thoma guided the development process through the establishment of a sound educational philosophy that emphasized higher level thinking skills and expansion of testing strategies to include writing for understanding. In subsequent years, the "Voluntary State Curriculum" was developed and the state assessment program became more defined. The first state tests in civic education



consisted of "poorly designed trivia" in a multiple-choice format that encouraged "drill and kill" types of instruction. Through the efforts of the re-focusing of social studies curriculum and instruction, the test was eventually redesigned to include brief constructed response (short answer) and extended constructed response (essay) as well as selected response (multiple choice).

In addition to the state academic content assessments, Maryland has very recently developed a High School Assessment (HSA) that has redesigned the 1992 high school assessment "to be more meaningful." The four tests include reading, math, writing, and citizenship. The assessments as well as the skills required to demonstrated proficiency are also known as "Project Basic."

The redesigned government/civics assessment is the blueprint for the new requirements for high school graduation. The goal for the civics test design is to include 60% of the questions on political science (of which there is a strong civic education focus, as per the standards) and the other 40% of the test will include foreign policy, international issues, economics, and geographical issues such as land use and reapportionment. Schools will be required to develop a correlation of their curriculum to the HSA and, in some cases, schools may need to redesign their curriculum. The basic skills of citizenship are expected to be a large part of ninth grade curriculum.

The Maryland Department of Education, and more specifically, Marcie Taylor-Thoma, has been a strong advocate of high quality social studies instruction with a specific and intentional civic education focus. As assessments continue to drive instruction, Maryland has provided the support, the structure, and the content necessary for a healthy outlook on civic education.

State Policy Rating Index (Levels 1-5): MARYLAND

State Standards - 5

State Assessments - 4

Graduation Requirements - 5

State Statutes and Laws - 3

State Frameworks or similar document(s) - 4

Other Related Policies or Statements - 1

Aggregate State Index - 3.7

## MISSOURI

### Background

Missouri adopted the Missouri Show Me Standards in Social Studies in 1996 and supports standards-based education with a state developed document, *The Missouri Framework for Curriculum Development in Social Studies*. The standards are divided into content and performance goals. The seven content standards are broad in nature and are addressed at multiple grade levels. The content standards include concepts such as constitutional democracy, history, economics, geography, and individuals in society. Two standards specifically address civic education. Standard 1 requires "knowledge of the principles expressed in documents shaping constitutional democracy in the United States" and standard 3 requires "knowledge of principles and process of the governance system."

The performance standards include the ability to acquire and apply knowledge, to communicate effectively, to develop problem-solving skills, and to develop citizenship skills.

The framework document presents a detailed and systematic approach to developing sound educational practice around the strategies such as questioning skills, application of knowledge, and evaluation of information at each grade level. This document outlines the rationale for the study of social studies with a section on "The Challenge of Citizenship" and "The Mission and Nature of Social Studies." The latter section includes a description of high quality citizenship education.

### Interview Notes

Interview with Bill Gerling, Assistant Director of Assessment/Social Studies Consultant, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Missouri Department of Education (January 28, 2005)

Bill Gerling, Social Studies Consultant with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education explained the civics requirements and assessments as determined by the state legislature and the Missouri State Board of Education. At the secondary level, students must complete a minimum of a half unit of civics (one semester) and one year of American History for graduation. Some school districts require a full year of civics. In addition, students must pass both a U.S. Constitution test and a state constitution test but the test itself is developed at the local level and may or may not be aligned to state standards; therefore, there is no quality control on the test itself. The test may be administered at any time between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, to be determined by the local district.

Social studies assessment tests, as part of the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) assessment system, had been required in the past but are now only voluntary due to state budget cuts. Districts must now pay for the test and although the participation rate is currently approximately 50%, the department sees fewer districts choosing to administer the test each year. The MAP results "can be used for accreditation purposes if districts choose to use them" but "Districts have to show they are requiring civics/government, constitution tests, and American History when they are examined for accreditation."

The Missouri State Board of Education formulates educational policy, often with input from the Commissioner of Education and the department. The educational statutes, determined by the state legislature, will often determine the details and the enforcement policy. In recent years, there has been no new legislation addressing civic education.

The Missouri Bar Association has worked with the state department to promote existing civic education programs to support and expand programs that provide statewide opportunities to showcase student achievement in civic education such as *We The People, Project*

*Citizen*, the *Mock Trial*, and an *Outstanding Citizen Award*. Missouri has established a Civics Commission, stemming from the national Civic Mission of Schools Commission on which Bill Gerling represents the state department in social studies education. This Commission sponsored a Civic Education symposium last year in which over 200 teachers participated in workshops and heard national education experts on civic education issues. In addition, teachers are recognized for civic education excellence at state Civics Symposium luncheons during the school year.

Teachers in Missouri are required to document professional development and many have taken opportunities in the past to use civic education in-services and workshops to fulfill their requirements. The state department maintains a portfolio of professional development opportunities and civic education is topic of which teachers frequently choose.

As far as effectiveness in promoting excellence and student achievement in civic education, the effect of state policy has been mixed. In spite of the current state requirements, assessment has shown the "many kids are still not picking up on the concepts." Some programs, such as *We the People*, have been very successful in increasing the numbers of students involved as well as the expanding Mock Trial and Project Citizen programs. Cooperation between the program coordinators and the state department has been very good and many students have benefited.

In spite of the expansion of programs and student involvement, student outcomes remain mixed. Some districts have realigned their curriculum to incorporate state content and process standards and have, therefore, increased expectations for student achievement while others have not changed curriculum nor instructional strategies. "State policy would be more effective if our state social studies test was mandatory; it would encourage districts to align their curricula to the state social studies standards and grade-level expectations."

State Policy Rating Index (Levels 1-5)-MISSOURI

State Standards - 5

State Assessments - 2

Graduation Requirements - 4

State Statutes and Laws - 3

State Frameworks or similar document(s) - 5

Other Related Policies or Statements - 4

Aggregate State Index - 3.8

## NEW YORK

### Background

New York has established five key standards in History-Social Science at three grade level clusters, i.e., elementary, intermediate, and commencement. For each standard at each level, standards are developed into key ideas, performance indicators, and sample tasks. The fifth standard is entitled, "Civics, Citizenship, and Government" and components of this standard were adapted from *The National Standards for Civics and Government, 1994*.

New York education law stipulates instruction shall be provided in "patriotism, citizenship and in certain historic documents" and instruction in "civility, citizenship and character education" (EDN, Article 17:801). The state offers a certificate in social studies for Grades 7-12 in teacher credentialing.

### Interview Notes

Interview with Deborah Shayo, Director of the Law, Youth & Citizenship Program, New York State Bar Association and the New York Department of Education (August 20, 2004).

Ms. Shayo is currently director of the Law, Youth & Citizenship Program, sponsored by the New York State Bar Association, and concurrently works as a consultant for the New York Education Department. She is the state director of the We the People program, funded by the Center for Civic Education.

New York boasts a highly prestigious testing program in the public schools, known as the New York Regents' Exam. Civic education is tested at each of the three levels although a stronger emphasis in math and English-language arts is evident. New York is, for the most part, in compliance with the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. In spite of the specific standard on civic education and due to a curriculum that

is "very crowded," civic education "doesn't get much attention." Of the five social studies standards, the fifth standard (i.e., civic education) is the least emphasized in the curriculum.

Confounding the problem is the abstract nature of civic education that encompasses more than historical knowledge. Ms. Shayo indicated that the testing system is more responsive to content that is less abstract and, therefore, it is more difficult to test civic knowledge on a typical multiple choice test. "Civic virtue is a non-tangible" and is not conducive to assessment systems that rely on multiple choice formats. Quantitative accountability systems are preferable because they translate easily into comparable scores which, in turn, can be easily reported by the media. Civic literacy requires abstract thinking skills and understanding of connections to social and political trends, all of which are not easily assessed.

Another issue for civic education is the question of who should teach the curriculum and who should be held accountable. "Nobody knows who should be responsible for teaching civics." Civic responsibility extends beyond the history classroom. In the broader scale, it may be debated that home, church, school, or community may bear some of the responsibility. Questions regarding individual beliefs as might surround an issue such as the flag salute needs to be addressed on the home front, and perhaps in relation to church and community. The influence of parental dispositions is evident in voting patterns in which tendencies to vote or not vote manifest in their children's dispositions toward voting but "Civic virtue is not rewarded in this county" and the community doesn't always overtly support positive involvement. Negative news stories tend to get the attention of the public and exemplary curriculum programs that provide civic education skills are ignored by the media and the educational community as well.

Because even the teachers are unclear about who should teach civic education, there is a lack of responsibility. Schools are still "compartmentalized



and departmentalized." The concept of teaching an integrated and broad-based curriculum that uses real life skills such as research, reasoning, speaking, and writing is not embraced by most teachers unless it specifically addresses their exclusive discipline. An example of this was evident to Ms. Shayo in New York when recently the English-Language Arts association examined *Project Citizen*, a public policy service learning curriculum program developed by the Center for Civic Education, and disregarded the wide array of listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills with the response that they "were not responsible for teaching civics or citizenship skills." Ms. Shayo feels that many teachers just "don't get it." Some teachers "can't see beyond their own responsibility" and they lack the insight and ability to use project-based curriculum programs to teach skills that reinforce the standards in their own discipline while at the same time reaching across disciplines to make real-life connections for the students.

New York educational policy is developed through agencies and policymakers such as the State Board of Regents, the Chancellor, and the State Commissioner of Education, who oversees the New York Department of Education. Typically, the Chancellor is an appointment who often represents the corporate world in background and experience. New York City, as one very large school district, is typically the pace-setter for other districts in the state. The State Department of Education is composed of curriculum specialists who effectively implement policy but also often provide the innovation and ideas that are, in turn, proposed to the State Commissioner and/or the State Board of Regents. For the most part, it is an effective system within the constraints of multiple entities and systems that operate independently.

Teacher unions remain very strong in New York and all aspects of the teaching profession are negotiated. Professional development days are built into the school calendar but recently it became a requirement that all teachers must have a minimum of 175 hours of

professional training every five years. The specific activities are at the discretion of the teachers.

To a large degree, teacher preparation programs also contribute to the lack of adequate civic education in New York schools. Elementary teachers, in particular, "don't have the content" as there is no required training in social studies other than a required unit on the *United States Constitution*. The purpose of education, as was inferred from the philosophy of Thomas Jefferson and the experiment in democracy, was maintained through the patriotic focus of school textbooks until after World War II.

Although evaluative and analytical skills are listed in the standards, there is no evidence of a systemic effort on the development of cognitive skills.

State Policy Rating Index (Levels 1-5): NEW YORK

State Standards - 5  
State Assessments - 1  
Graduation Requirements - 4  
State Statutes and Laws - 4  
State Frameworks or similar document(s) - 4  
Other Related Policies or Statements - 4  
Aggregate State Index - 3.7

## OHIO

### Background

The academic content standards for Social Studies instruction in Ohio consists of an overview standard for each discipline and benchmark indicators for five grade clusters (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12). There are standards for History, People in Societies, Geography, Economics, Government, Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities, and Social Studies Skills and Methods. The standard for Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities states that "Students use knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in order to examine and evaluate civic ideals and to participate in community life and the American democratic system. Citizenship proficiency is tested at the 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> grades.

Very recently, a proposal for development of the Ohio Social Studies Resource Center has been organized through a broad-based consortium of social studies agencies, programs, and associations. This model program would establish a resource center that would provide access to social studies resources, assessment tools, delivery systems, and professional development through identification of effective teaching practices, exemplary teaching materials, and demonstrations of effective use of recommended resources. This project demonstrates an outstanding collaborative effort between the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Board of Regents, the Ohio Historical Society, Ohio State University, the Ohio Geographic Alliance, the Ohio Council for Economic Education, the Ohio Center for Law-Related Education, the Ohio Council for the Social Studies, and the Ohio Education Association.

## Interview Notes

Interview with Jared Reitz, Director of Programs,  
Ohio Center for Law Related Education (July 27, 2004).

Jared Reitz of the Ohio Center for Law-Related Education described the purpose and structure of the agency he represents. The Ohio Center for Law-Related Education is sponsored by the state law enforcement agencies, the court system, and the Ohio Bar Association. The center serves as a resource for schools to coordinate curricular programs and projects such as the *We The People* Mock Congressional Hearings, *Project Citizen*, Mock Trial, Ohio Youth for Justice, "Ohio Government in Action," teacher in-service programs, and other special projects. The center takes pride in aligning all programs and resources to the Ohio State Academic Content Standards.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) does not have state approved materials nor makes recommendations; therefore, the alignment of materials by the Center for Law-Related Education (CLRE) assists local schools and teachers in determining how and when to use each specific set of materials. "The Ohio Department of Education is very competent" and makes effective use of focus groups in developing programmatic policy. ODE is a key member of the coalition groups that have formed to promote and support civic education initiatives.

A Civic Mission of Schools Coalition has been organized in Ohio and they are in the process of developing a needs assessment in schools throughout the state. A summit meeting has been convened and they are in the process of trying to secure grant funding for exceptional school programs in civic education as model programs. There has also been a civic education task force established by the state legislator but "not much is happening" in this arena.

"Teachers feel locked into the curriculum" and collaborative teaching and integration of subject matter doesn't happen often. Although "good teachers can find

ways to create lessons that students will love," teachers need to take advantage of the programs that are available. It's important to help teachers develop lessons and curriculum that encourages students to develop higher level thinking skills, to become engaged through meaningful activities, and to reason while they "think on their feet."

High quality civic education delivery requires raised awareness levels among the teachers through powerful professional development, a proclivity to remain "current in the profession," and monetary resources to support the professional development efforts for substitute coverage, transportation, per diems, and non-contract time.

The Ohio Center for Law-Related Education has been a key player in facilitating and forming a broad-based coalition to support the Civic Mission of Schools. The purpose of the alliance and the resulting project will be to advocate and support stronger citizenship education within the social studies program. The Ohio Department of Education has been very supportive and has been receptive, and even solicitous, of input through focus groups and partnerships that improve the civic education agenda within the social studies curriculum.

State Policy Rating Index (Levels 1-5): OHIO

State Standards - 4  
State Assessments - 5  
Graduation Requirements - 4  
State Statutes and Laws - 4  
State Frameworks or similar document(s) - 3  
Other Related Policies or Statements - 4  
Aggregate State Index - 4.0

## OREGON

### Background

Oregon has state standards at all grade levels and the social science standards are grouped by Civics & Government, Economics, Geography, and Historical Skills. The standards are grade-level specific but all are delineated into concepts and skills that begin with a "Common Curriculum Goal (CCG)," the "Content Standard," the "Benchmark Standard," "Eligible Content," and the specific skill listed as the "Grade Level Map." The social science standards are assessed at benchmark levels at Grades 5, 8, and 10.

### Interview Notes

Interview with Barbara Rost, Program Director of the Classroom Law Project; Judy Lowrey, Adjunct Instructor at Western Oregon University; and Cheryl Johnson, teacher in Oregon Public Schools; Review was provided by Andrea Morgan, Educational Specialist, Office of Curriculum, Instruction & Field Services, Oregon Department of Education.

Oregon has had state academic curriculum standards for many years and the specificity is a result of clarifying for teachers the specific skills, content, and concepts that need to be taught. State assessments in social science at Grades 5, 8, and 10 tend to "drive the curriculum" and, in fact, school schedules are built around the assessment schedules, to some extent. Districts have sent messages to school support agencies such as the Classroom Law Project expressing, "Don't conflict anything with the tests [schedules]."

In addition to testing, there are a large amount of pressures on teachers. The schools are faced with limited funding, pressure to maintain high test scores, and an increasingly crowded curriculum. Reading and math require the greatest amount of attention from both a testing perspective and a public reporting

through the media. In some districts, principals are held account-able for the testing scores, thereby extending the pressure to teaching levels. The state requires the school report cards to include participation rates.

An important component of the state standards is the Civics & Government strand that includes civic content, citizenship skills, and application of content. Another strand on historical skills includes the cognitive skills of comparison, analysis, and evaluation. Benchmark testing in social science begins at Grade 5 but the benchmarks at Grade 3 require teachers to teach responsibility, the rule of law (classroom rules), and community. Testing results at Grades 8 and 10 are also posted publicly. As a result, the grades at which social science is tested tends have more curriculum time allocated to that subject. In other aspects of social science education, there is evidence of a decline in participation in student civic active-ties such as "Law Day" and visits to the state capital. Character development is a part of the state standards in Health/Physical Education but there is little evidence of connections made between character development and civic education.

State educational policy in Oregon tends to be responsive to constituency advocacy groups. Rarely does the executive branch, the governor, impose mandates on education as Oregon tends to rely on local control for most aspects of the educational process. Some issues are left to voter initiatives but Oregon requires a majority of registered voters to cast a ballot. This strategy has been used for some education issues in the past, but is most effective in presidential election years. The Oregon Department of Education, in contrast, has played a strong role in providing teachers with resources, curriculum support, and curriculum development services. Many of their curriculum support projects are in development at this time but many are available on the department website.

State Policy Rating Index (Levels 1-5): OREGON

State Standards - 5

State Assessments - 4

Graduation Requirements - 4

State Statutes and Laws - 5

State Frameworks or similar document(s) - 4

Other Related Policies or Statements - 3

Aggregate State Index - 4.2



## PENNSYLVANIA

### Background

Pennsylvania state law requires that civics be taught at the elementary and secondary levels in all public and non-public schools. The Academic Standards for Civics and Government are established as a part of the state code of Pennsylvania at Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12. Sections of the standards include "Principles and Documents of Government," "Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship," "How Government Works," and "How International Relationships Function." State statute (§ 4.52) requires school districts to include civics and government testing in local assessment systems.

### Interview Notes

Interview with Myron Yoder, District Coordinator, We the People and Project Citizen, Center for Civic Education (July 26, 2004).

Although the civic education standards for Pennsylvania are quite specific, the social science disciplines of civics/government, history, economics, and geography are all related and important to full understanding of any single social science concentration. Civic education is taught at all grade levels, Kindergarten through Grade 12, but exit level standards have been identified at Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12. Specific indicators for these grade levels list content and skills that have been identified for mastery.

Pennsylvania tests reading, writing, and math on a statewide basis. There is no state assessment in civic education but the districts must show evidence of an assessment system that covers all subjects, including civics. Civic competency is often assessed through reading and writing skills based on civic content from the standards. District reporting is a "numbers crunching" model to indicate percentage of students that achieve mastery and the system reports on progress.

With the emphasis on reading, writing, and math, "districts are trying not to lose ground in History-Social Science." The need to integrate history-social science with English-language arts is recognized. The analysis and evaluation skills that are evident through-out the civics standards are important to emphasize, on a statewide basis, as critical in student learning.

State policy enforcement has been "poorly financed" and weak which has allowed school districts "more [self-] determination" in developing and implementing a civics education program and assessment of their own design. The state standards are "anchor standards," indicating minimum levels of content and performance expectations on which local curriculum is built and developed. Pennsylvania law does empower a state takeover of schools in which there is an insufficient percentage of students reaching target achievement levels over 3 years.

A true assessment of program effectiveness would measure evidence of application of positive civic dispositions of students engaged in civic activities. Student involvement would include civic activities such as voting, policy development, community involvement, service, election volunteerism, and policy awareness. The ideal civic education curriculum would see a "full, all-day focus" on civic instruction.

State law in Pennsylvania has been influenced, in the past, by large groups that have succeeded in seeing specialty laws passed but often these laws lack enforcement. In the meantime, schools and districts have developed and adopted programs to meet their own identified needs such as violence prevention and character education. Factionalized groups such as Street Law, the Southern Law Poverty Center, and the Center for Civic Education have tended to compete for the limited amount of social science time that is available. A better solution would be for a cohesive, cooperative program to be developed through a coalition of related programs. A "uniform voice" would have a far

better opportunity to address the issue of the shrinking time slot for history-social science in the curriculum picture.

State Policy Rating Index (Levels 1-5): PENNSYLVANIA

State Standards - 5  
State Assessments - 1  
Graduation Requirements - 4  
State Statutes and Laws - 5  
State Frameworks or similar document(s) - 2  
Other Related Policies or Statements - 2  
Aggregate State Index - 3.2