



# CIVIC READINESS INITIATIVE

BOARD OF REGENTS  
COLLEGE, CAREER, AND CIVIC READINESS WORKGROUP  
JANUARY 2020



New York State  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



**Civic Readiness-** Civic readiness is the ability to make a positive difference in the public life of our communities through the combination of civic knowledge, skills and actions, mindsets, and experiences.



**Civic Learning-** students demonstrate fundamental knowledge of Social Studies, engage in relevant experiences that include students as active participants and develop an understanding of self as part of and responsible to larger social groups

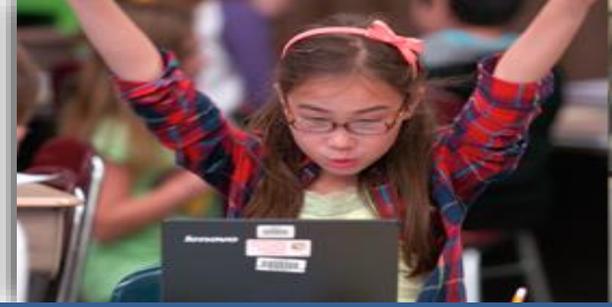


**Civil Rights-** Civil rights are an expansive and significant set of rights that are designed to protect individuals from unfair treatment; they are the rights of individuals to receive equal treatment (and to be free from unfair treatment or discrimination) in a number of settings -- including education, employment, housing, public accommodations, and more -- and based on certain legally-protected characteristics.



**Civic Engagement-** working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills and actions, mindsets and experiences necessary to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in community, through both political and non-political processes.

# The State of Civics in New York State



Only 22.7 percent of eligible voters voted in the 11/19 election in NYS

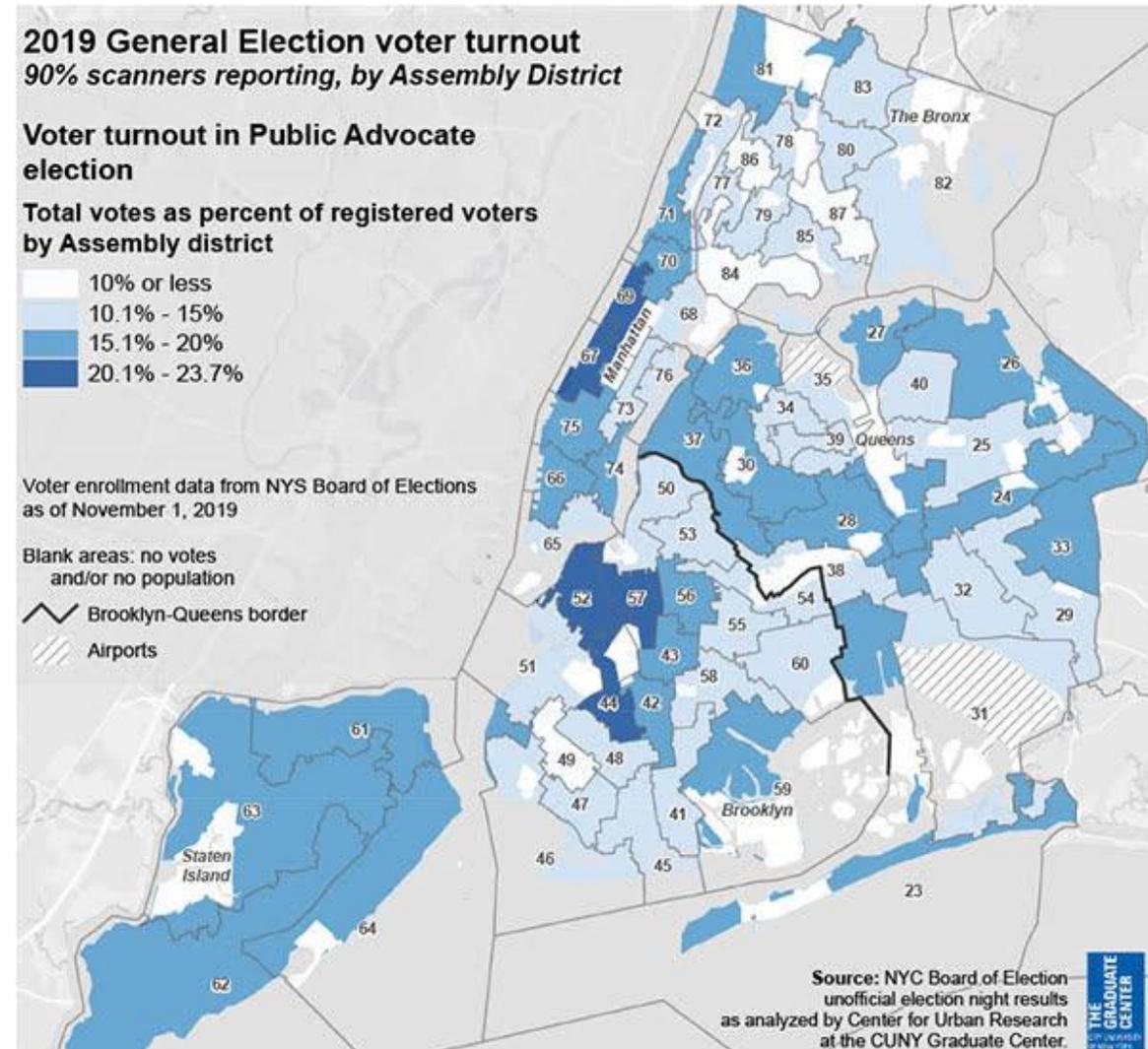
53% of Americans think undocumented immigrants have no rights under the U.S. Constitution

Only 26% of Americans can name all three branches of government.

New York State ranked 47th in the nation in voter turnout

# The State of Civics in New York State

In the 2019 General Election, all five boroughs had assembly districts where 10% or less of registered voters came out to vote for Public Advocate.

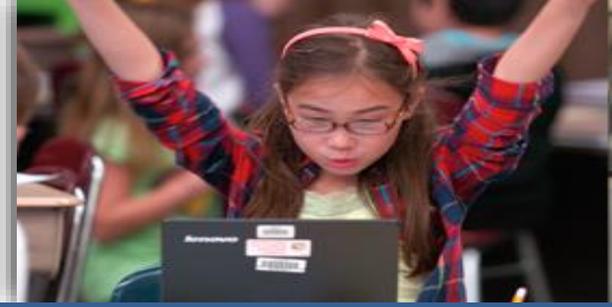


# Civic Readiness the ESSA Plan and Statewide Initiatives

ESSA Plan	Connection to Civic Readiness
Civic Readiness Index	Empower students to become active, engaged civic participants in our multicultural democracy
Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education	Provide opportunities to learn about power and privilege and empower learners to be agents of positive social change
Equity	Civic education is a means to a more equitable, more just democracy responsive to the diverse realities of our students
Social Emotional Learning (SEL)	Self and Social Awareness – the ability to recognize how thoughts, feelings, and actions are interconnected; and the ability to take the perspective of and have respect for those with different backgrounds or cultures are required of civically minded citizens
Mental Health Literacy	Sense of self esteem and confidence Ability to make a contribution to one's community

# NYS K-12 Social Studies Framework

## Standard 5—Civics, Citizenship, and Government



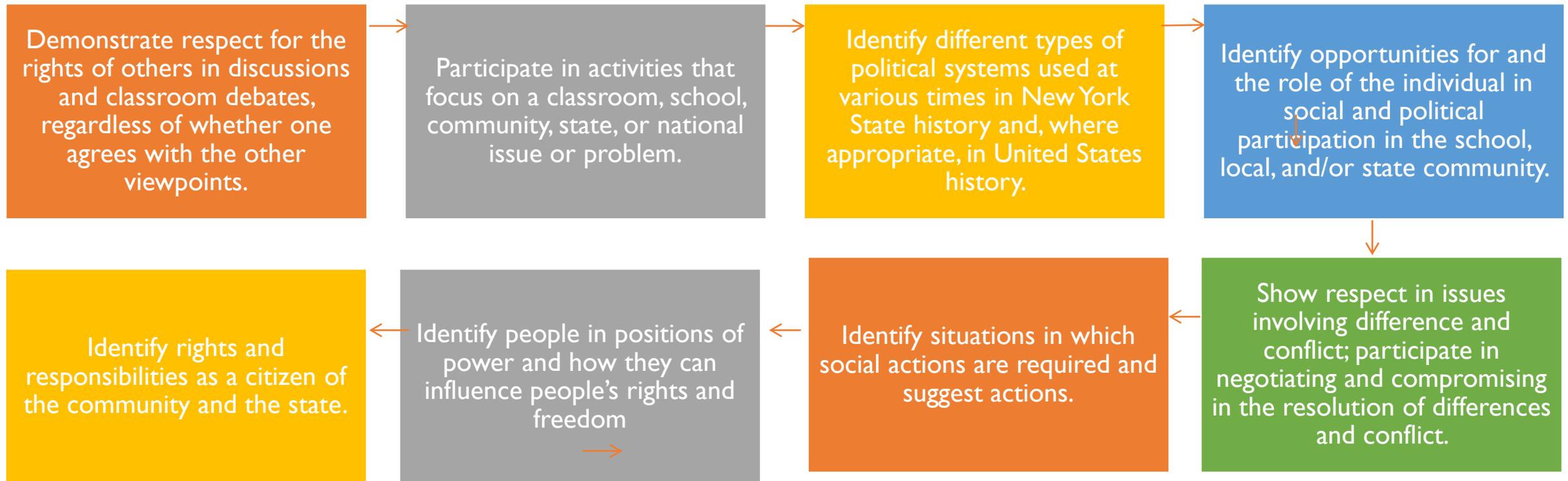
The study of civics, citizenship, and government involves learning about political systems; the purposes of government and civic life; and the differing assumptions held by people across time and place regarding power, authority, governance, and law. (Adapted from *The National Standards for Civics and Government*, 1994)

# WHERE DOES CIVICS FIT IN NY'S CLASSROOMS?

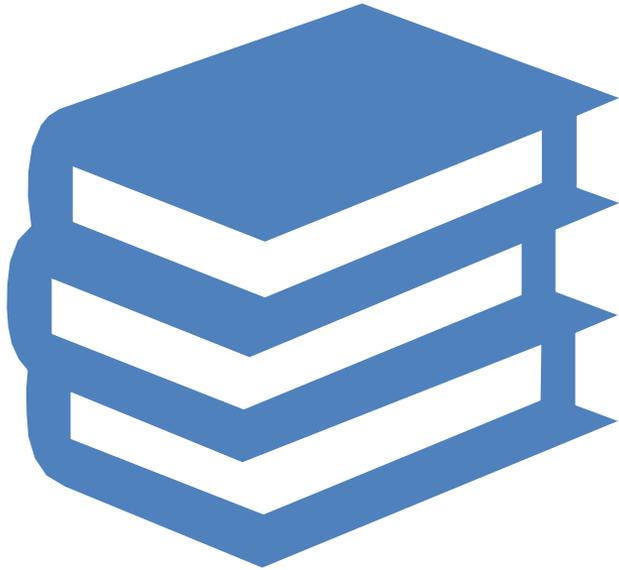
- **Social Studies Practices** represent the social science and historical thinking skills that students should develop throughout their K-12 education in order to be prepared for civic participation, college, and careers. Social Studies Practices should be infused with Social Studies content K-12.
- **Content Specifications** across the K-12 continuum directly address both civic knowledge and civic engagement
- **Required Coursework:** Participation in Government is a required ½ unit of credit course in order to earn a diploma in NY State
- **Assessments:** The US History Regents Framework exam contains a civic literacy document based essay



# CIVIC PARTICIPATION SOCIAL STUDIES PRACTICE - ARTICULATION K-12



# Sample Civic Readiness Content Specifications



- Kindergarten- Students will identify basic rights they have (e.g., provision of food, clothing, shelter, and education, and protection from abuse, bullying, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination).
- Second Grade- Students will participate in voting within the classroom and in school, as appropriate. Students will explore opportunities to provide service to their school community and the community at large (e.g., beautifying school grounds, writing thank-you notes to helpers).
- Fourth Grade- Students will discuss active citizenship and adults' responsibility to vote, to understand important issues and to serve on a jury
- Seventh Grade- Students will identify the individual rights of citizens that are protected by the Bill of Rights. Students will investigate examples of early 19<sup>th</sup> century reform movements, such as education, prisons, temperance, and mental health care, and examine the circumstances that led to the need for reform
- Eighth Grade- Students will examine struggles for equality and factors that enabled or limited success on behalf of women, farm workers, Native Americans, the disabled and the LGBT community
- Eleventh Grade Students will trace the following efforts in terms of issues/goals, key individuals and groups and successes/limitations
  - Brown Power (Chicano movement) e.g., Cesar Chavez, United Farm Workers
  - Student rights (e.g., Engel V. Vitale (1962), Tinker V. Des Moines SD (1969), NJ V. TLO (1985))
- Eleventh Grade- Students will evaluate the USA Patriot Act, including constitutional issues raised about the violation of civil liberties by the federal government's electronic surveillance programs

# GRADE 12 PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT REQUIRED COURSE

This course aims to provide students with opportunities to become engaged in the political process by acquiring the knowledge and practicing the skills necessary for active citizenship. Participation in government and in our communities is fundamental to the success of American democracy.

Twelfth Grade- 12.G2a - Equality before the law and due process are two fundamental values that apply to all under the jurisdiction of the United States. While the United States legal system aims to uphold the values of equality before the law, due process, human dignity, freedom of conscience, inalienable rights, and civility, the extent to which the legal system upholds these values in practice is an issue of ongoing civic debate.

Twelfth Grade- 12.G4e - Citizens participate in civic life through volunteerism and advocacy, including efforts such as contacting elected officials, signing/organizing petitions, protesting, canvassing, and participating in/organizing boycotts.



# CIVICS IN ASSESSMENT

## REGENTS EXAM IN U.S. HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT CIVIC LITERACY DOCUMENT-BASED ESSAY

Extended essay based on the set of six documents and focused on constitutional and civic issues

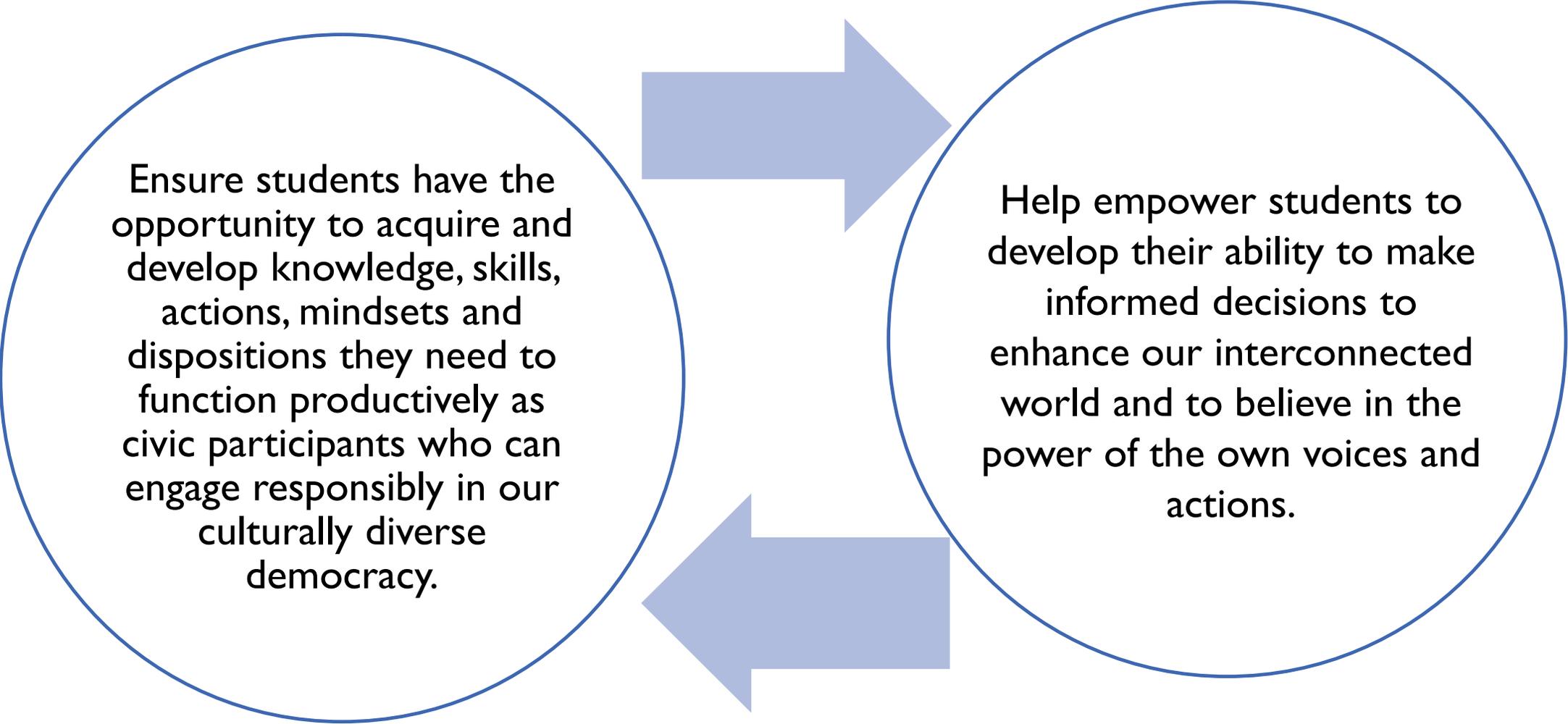
Essay Task: Students will be instructed to read and analyze the documents. Using information from the documents and their knowledge of United States history and government, students will write an essay in which they are instructed to:

- Describe the historical circumstances surrounding a constitutional or civic issue
- Explain efforts by individuals, groups, and/or governments to address this constitutional or civic issue
- Discuss the extent to which the efforts were successful, OR Discuss the impact of the efforts on the United States and/or American society

# OVERVIEW OF THE CIVIC READINESS TASK FORCE

Civic Readiness Task Force was appointed by the Board of Regents. The Task Force met five times between 2018-2019.

The Task Force was comprised of educators from public, private and charter schools, administrators, civic advocates, representatives from the judicial department, Board of Elections and other stakeholders committed to strengthening civics education. The Task Force included representatives that reflect New York State's rich diversity, including parents and teachers of students with disabilities and English Language Learners, and representatives from all of New York's regions including the Big 5 cities, urban, suburban, and rural communities.



Ensure students have the opportunity to acquire and develop knowledge, skills, actions, mindsets and dispositions they need to function productively as civic participants who can engage responsibly in our culturally diverse democracy.

Help empower students to develop their ability to make informed decisions to enhance our interconnected world and to believe in the power of the own voices and actions.

# CIVIC READINESS TASK FORCE MEMBERS

**Michael Rebell, Chairman**, Executive Director, Center for Educational Equity  
**Dawn Bartz**, Social Studies and Instructional Technology, Yonkers Public Schools  
**Brian Carlin**, Social Studies Instructional Leader, NYC DOE  
**Michael Coppotelli**, Associate Superintendent, Archdiocese of NY  
**Cheryl Couser**, Deputy Director of Public Information, Board of Elections  
**Barry Derfel**, Assistant Superintendent TST BOCES  
**April Francis**, Staff Development Specialist for PNW BOCES  
**Michael DiMezza**, CTE Director, HFM BOCES  
**DeNora Getachew**, NYC Executive Director, Generation Citizen  
**Bill Hecht**, District Superintendent, Orange Ulster BOCES  
**Joe Karb**, Social Studies Teacher, Springville MS  
**Jessica Karnes**, K-12 Social Studies Coordinator, Erie 1 BOCES  
**Lisa Kissinger**, Social Studies Department Chairperson, Shenendehowa  
**Laura Ladd Bierman**, Executive Director of the NYS League of Women Voters  
**Steve LaMorte**, Executive Director of Social Studies, Rochester City School District  
**Debra Lesser**, Director, Justice Resource Center, NYC DOE  
**Tony Lopez**, Executive Director of Zone 126

# CIVIC READINESS TASK FORCE MEMBERS (CON'T)

**Nicholas Norman**, Field Liaison, UFT

**Kamorudeen Olayuken Jr.**, Assistant Principal, PS 78

**Aruna Patel**, Instructional Specialist, New Visions

**Charles Perreaud**, Jury Commissioner, Monroe County

**Joe Rogers**, Director of Public Engagement and Government Affairs, Center for Educational Equity

**Jenna Ryall**, Civics For All Lead Facilitator, NYC DOE

**Peter Sawyer**, Department Chair for Civic Engagement, Hudson Valley Community College

**Joe Schmidt**, Lead Instructional Specialist for Social Studies, NYC DOE

**David Scott**, Law and Civics Education Coordinator, Northport CSD,

**Chris Sperry**, Director of Curriculum for Project Looksharp

**Ellen Sullivan**, Assistant in Educational Services, NYSUT

**Tara Thibault**, School Media Library Representative, Roundout Valley HS

**Christine Zapata**, Social Studies Instructional Lead, NYC DOE

## **NYSED Staff:**

**Christy Radez**, Lead Facilitator, Associate in Instructional Services, NYSED

**Allison Armour-Garb**, Senior Advisor, P-20 Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning, OHE NYSED

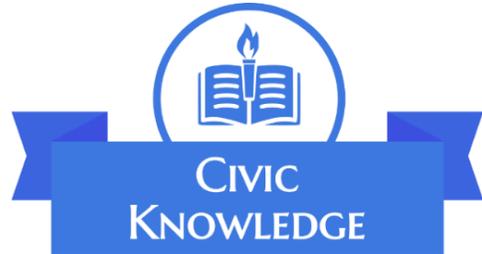
**Marybeth Casey**, Director of Curriculum and Instruction and CTE, NYSED



CIVIC READINESS  
TASK FORCE  
RECOMMENDATIONS

- State Definition of Civic Readiness
- Civics Capstone Project
- State Seal of Civic Readiness

PROPOSED CIVIC READINESS DEFINITION:  
CIVIC READINESS IS THE ABILITY TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE PUBLIC LIFE OF OUR  
COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE COMBINATION OF CIVIC KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ACTIONS, MINDSETS  
AND EXPERIENCES



Demonstrate a fundamental and functional knowledge of government, law, history, geography, culture, economics, and current events. These may include inequities within our democratic system at the federal, state and local level. Students should know how to apply this knowledge to different circumstances and settings.



Demonstrate a broad array of critical analytic, verbal, communication, media literacy and other skills and participate in a wide variety of actions. Students should practice such actions both inside and outside of school on a regular basis.



Demonstrate the mindset of a participant in a democratic society. A civic mindset is a commitment to democratic interpersonal and intrapersonal values, virtues, attitudes, and beliefs and informed actions that promote and facilitate meaningful participation in civic life. It is an understanding of self as part of and responsible to larger social groups.



Participate in developmentally appropriate civic experiences. Civic readiness should be developed in a variety of settings and ways—inside and outside of the classroom, across content areas, and for multiple purposes. Civic Readiness should be promoted by engaging students in relevant experiences that include students as active participants.

# CIVICS CAPSTONE PROJECT

## **In a Civic Readiness Capstone project, students will:**

- Identify a civic issue (problem) facing them, their school, or their community
- Analyze a civic issue (problem), evaluate alternative solutions, design and/or execute a solution for this problem.
- Take informed action to address the civic issue.

Examine  
Community-  
discuss issues that  
matter

Identify Issues

Conduct  
Research

Analyze

Develop  
Strategies and  
Solutions

Take Informed  
Action

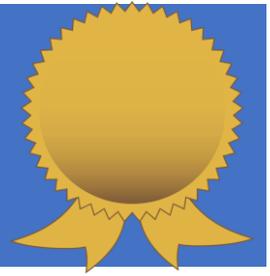
Communicate

Reflect

## ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A CIVICS CAPSTONE PROJECT

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# THE PROPOSED SEAL OF CIVIC READINESS



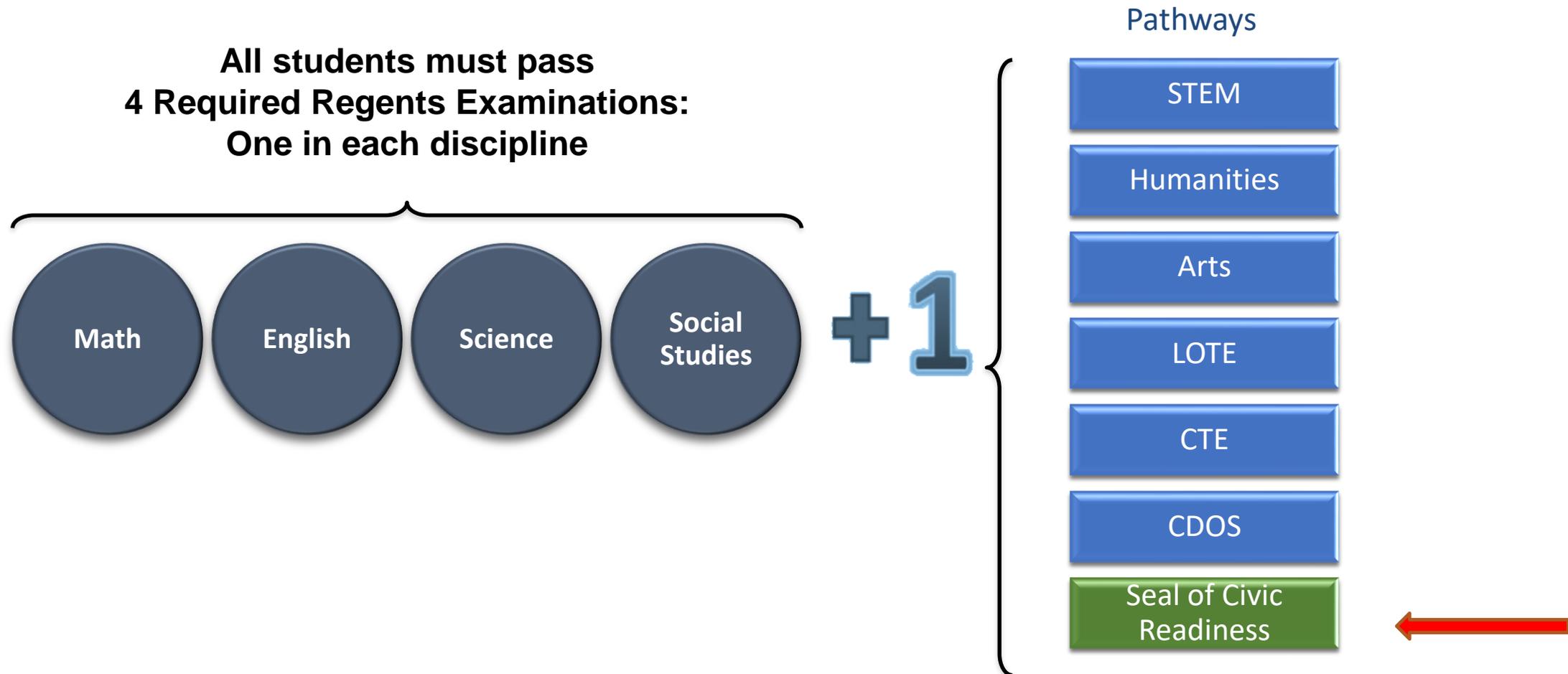
- I. Affirms NYSED's commitment to strengthening civics education
- II. Incentivizes districts and students to participate in meaningful civic engagement projects
- III. Can be used as a +I Pathway
- IV. Can be used as a stand alone seal
- V. Students earn the seal by earning points on a menu of options that reflect civic knowledge and civic experiences.

## Seal Requirements:

The seal would required students to earn points in two areas; Civic Knowledge and Civic Participation

<b>Civic Knowledge</b>	<b>Pts.</b>	<b>Civic Participation</b>	<b>Pts.</b>
4 Credits of Social Studies	1	Culminating High School Civic Project	1.5
Mastery level on Social Studies Regents	1.5*	Service Learning Project (minimum 25 hours) and reflective civic learning essay	1*
Social Studies Regents Exams Proficiency Level	1*	Mastery level in an elective course the promotes civic engagement	.5*
Advanced Social Studies Courses	.5*	Middle School Capstone Project	1
Research Project	1	Extra-curricular participation or work-based learning experience (minimum 40 hours) and an application of knowledge essay	.5*
		Civics Capstone Project	4

# The Seal of Civic Readiness could be used as a Humanities Pathway or a stand alone seal for students who choose a different pathway.



# PROPOSED NEXT STEPS



# Future Action

## Civic Readiness Survey

- Create a statewide survey to collect data on effective civic engagement activities in the rural, suburban and urban communities of New York State one year after implementation

## Civic Readiness Schools

- Explore the criteria for a recognition system for Schools of Civic Readiness that engage in the democratization of practices and empower student voice in policy decision

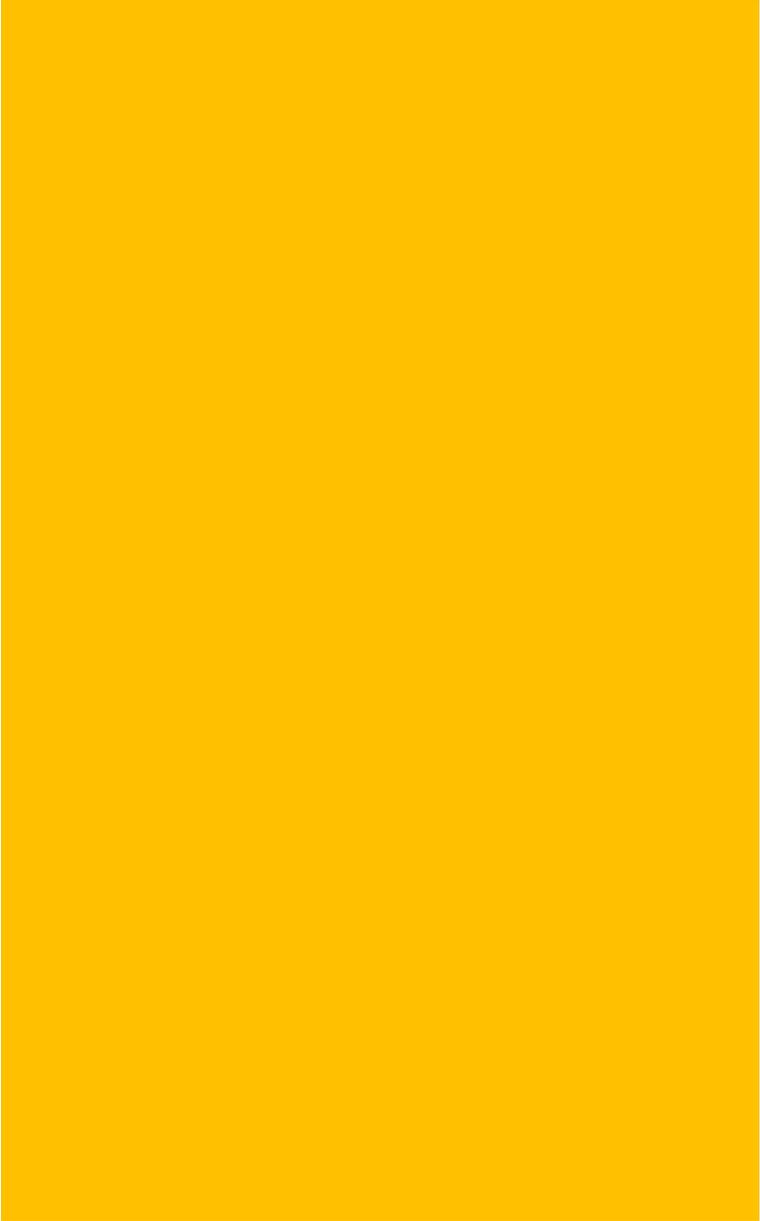


# Puerto Rican/Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute



## Guest Speakers:

- Diana Vazquez, State Director of the Puerto Rican Youth Leadership Institute, Questar III BOCES
- Terry Bordell, Chief School Improvement Officer, Questar III BOCES
- Xavier Fitzsimmons-Cruz, Bethlehem Central School District, PRHYLI Alumni
- Mario Vazquez, Schodack Central School District, PRHYLI Alumni



**QUESTIONS?**