

California Department of Education

Executive Office

SBE-003 (REV. 11/2017)

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# California State Board of Education March 2023 Agenda Item #05

## Subject

State Seal of Civic Engagement Program Update

## Type of Action

Information

## Summary of the Issue(s)

California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 51471 directed the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) to recommend to the State Board of Education (SBE) criteria for awarding a State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE). The SBE adopted statewide criteria and guidance for awarding an SSCE in September 2020, and participating local educational agencies (LEAs) began offering the SSCE for the 2020–21 school year. The Educator Excellence and Equity Division (EEED) is in the third year of fulfilling SSCE insignia requests while also supporting expansion of the SSCE program.

## Recommendation

The California Department of Education (CDE) recommends that the SBE review the provided information and resources related to the SSCE.

## Brief History of Key Issues

Assembly Bill 24, Chapter 604, Statutes of 2017, added sections 51470–51474 to the *EC,* which direct the SSPI to develop, and the SBE to adopt, a set of criteria for LEAs choosing to award the SSCE. The SBE adopted statewide criteria and guidance for awarding an SSCE on September 10, 2020. More information about the development of the SSCE, including the adopted statewide criteria and guidance, is available from the “Criteria and Guidance” tab on the CDE SSCE web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/hssstateseal.asp>.

The EEED oversees statewide administration of the SSCE, including facilitating the insignia request process. Although data on the SSCE is not currently collected in the statewide data collection system, the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System, the EEED does track and provide information on LEA participation in the SSCE using data drawn from the online SSCE insignia request form. This data is available on the CDE SSCE web page under the “Overview and Participating Local Educational Agencies” tab at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/hssstateseal.asp>.

Additionally, the 2022 Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill (Assembly Bill 181, Section 71) added *EC* Section 51475, which establishes the California Serves program, administered by the CDE in collaboration with California Volunteers. The purpose of California Serves is to promote access to effective service learning for pupils in grade twelve who are enrolled at participating LEAs, with the goal of expanding access for high school graduates in obtaining an SSCE through service learning. Additional information about the new California Serves program is available on the CDE California Serves web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/californiaserves.asp>.

## Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action

*EC* required the SSPI to recommend the criteria to the SBE by January 1, 2020, and that the SBE take action on the criteria by January 31, 2021. After forming the SSCE Advisory Group to help develop proposed statewide criteria, the CDE presented initial criteria and guidance to the SBE for review and feedback on July 10, 2019. SBE members discussed the importance of ensuring that the SSCE is accessible to all students, including students with disabilities, and recommended modifying the criteria language to emphasize continuous civic engagement and an interdisciplinary approach. Members also engaged in conversation about whether and how the SSCE might be used for accountability purposes, but no specific recommendation was made.

The CDE presented revised criteria to the SBE on September 11, 2019. The SBE’s discussion led to a request for additional modifications relating to clarifying terminology around civic engagement and pluralism and diversity, further ensuring accessibility for all students in all contexts and communities, incentivizing ongoing civic engagement, and addressing a need for guidance on providing civic engagement opportunities for younger students. SBE members also recommended allowing additional LEA flexibility in reviewing student reflections on civic engagement project activities and requested that instances of civil disobedience be recognized as forms of civic engagement. Lastly, members agreed that future use of the SSCE for accountability purposes should remain a consideration, but the primary focus should be on adopting the recommended criteria so that the CDE could begin to collect data on the SSCE as soon as possible.

CDE staff incorporated this feedback into revised criteria and implementation guidance, which the SBE adopted on September 10, 2020. The CDE has encouraged LEAs to implement the criteria in a manner appropriate for their own local contexts to ensure maximum accessibility for all students, at all grade levels, including those in alternative school settings. The CDE is providing this SBE Item to provide a general update on the SSCE, as it nears the third year of availability, and to share information on anticipated next steps.

## Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate)

The cost to develop a casting for the SSCE foil press to produce the seals and to print the seals for the first two years of implementation was $4,680.82. This does not include the ongoing cost of shipping seals. An additional 25,000 seals were purchased for the 2022–23 school year at a cost of $8,496.64.

## Attachment(s)

* **Attachment 1:** State Seal of Civic Engagement Program Update   
  (12 Pages)
* **Attachment 2:** Overview of State Civic Seal Programs   
  (8 Pages)

# State Seal of Civic Engagement Program Update

## The State Seal of Civic Engagement

On September 10, 2020, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted criteria and guidance to award a State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE) to California students in grade eleven or twelve who demonstrate excellence in civics education and participation, and an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. Local educational agencies (LEAs) have been able to request insignias since the 2020–21 school year.

Earning an insignia indicates that the student has fulfilled all five statewide criteria, as well as fulfilling any other local criteria, requirements, or procedures. Students may choose to have the SSCE insignia affixed to one of four possible documents: a diploma, certificate of completion, General Education Development (GED) certificate, or a grade eleven or twelve transcript.

## State Seal of Civic Engagement Criteria

The five statewide SSCE criteria are intended to provide LEAs with a framework for making determinations of student qualifications required to earn the SSCE, based on their own local contexts. The criteria are written to ensure that no student is excluded from an opportunity to earn the SSCE based on academic ability, alternative school settings, or unique or unconventional expressions of civic engagement. Additional information on the criteria development is available on the California Department of Education (CDE) SSCE Criteria Development web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/sscedevelopment.asp>.

The student must:

1. Be engaged in academic work in a productive way;
2. Demonstrate a competent understanding of United States and California constitutions; functions and governance of local governments; tribal government structures and organizations; the role of the citizen in a constitutional democracy; and democratic principles, concepts, and processes;
3. Participate in one or more informed civic engagement project(s) that address real-world problems and require students to identify and inquire into civic needs or problems, consider varied responses, take action, and reflect on efforts;
4. Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions through self-reflection; and
5. Exhibit character traits that reflect civic-mindedness and a commitment to positively impact the classroom, school, community and/or society.

The SSCE Implementation Guidance for each criterion, available on the CDE SSCE Implementation Guidance web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/ssceguidance.asp>, offers ideas and considerations to structure local requirements to award the SSCE, using the adopted statewide criteria as a foundation. Each LEA should develop criteria considering its own local context to ensure maximum accessibility for all students, at all grade levels, including those in alternative school settings. Local governing boards are encouraged to approve or adopt their own policies regarding implementation of the SSCE criteria.

## Components of the State Seal of Civic Engagement

LEAs that choose to offer the SSCE are responsible for developing local programming before offering the award to eligible students. Local programming refers to all of the local resources, infrastructure, requirements and procedures that need to be determined in order for students to earn an SSCE. This may include, but is not limited to:

* Specific student requirements, such as coursework, assessments, civic engagement project guidelines and requirements, service-learning expectations, and/or reflections;
* Internal application procedures that students follow to earn, apply for, and receive the SSCE insignia; and
* Record-keeping procedures at the site and LEA.

Because these decisions are made locally, the requirements and process for earning an SSCE differ from district to district.

The SSCE is an optional opportunity; LEAs at the district or county level must have adopted local SSCE programming in order for students to earn the SSCE. Students may not apply for an insignia from the CDE, and organizations may not apply on behalf of students.

Where local SSCE programming has been adopted, students in grades eleven or twelve who are enrolled in a California public school, direct-funded charter school, the juvenile justice system, and/or in an alternative school setting who have met all five statewide criteria, as well as any local criteria and requirements, are eligible to earn an SSCE.

## Middle and Elementary Schools and the State Seal of Civic Engagement

Although students in grades eleven and twelve are eligible to earn an SSCE, a key purpose of the legislation is to create pathways for pupils in elementary and secondary schools to become civically engaged in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels.

To encourage students to begin this process in elementary or middle schools, some LEAs are developing pathways for students to become civically engaged before reaching high school:

* Anaheim Union High School District (UHSD) is partnering with feeder elementary school districts to facilitate vertical learning to encourage civic learning that begins in kindergarten.
* Fresno Unified School District (USD) is implementing the SSCE regionally, with Fresno High School as an epicenter that works with middle and elementary schools in its region to integrate civic learning opportunities vertically. Participation in Fresno USD’s Fresno State Bonner Award also incentivizes schools to encourage students to pursue civic learning in younger grades.
* Orange County Department of Education created a Civic Learning Pathways document and slide deck to help support projects for students to earn Civic Learning Pathways certificates in elementary- and middle-school grade bands.
* Sacramento County Office of Education (COE) is exploring options for awarding local intermediate civic engagement seals to elementary and middle school students, and Sacramento COE leadership has been openly supportive of implementing the SSCE locally as a “civic experience that starts in kindergarten” and feeds into programs offered at every school level.

## Other Civic Seal Programs

Upon adopting the SSCE criteria, California joined a small number of states that formally recognize and promote student civic engagement with seals to affix to student transcripts, diplomas, or certificates of completion. Arizona, Georgia, New York, Tennessee, and Virginia also offer civic diploma seals; Ohio is piloting a program that begins with the class of 2023. Please see Attachment 2: Overview of State Civic Seal Programs, for more information. The Educator Excellence and Equity Division (EEED) staff recently supported a National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Civic Seal Task Force, which developed a Civic Seal Toolkit to support other states that are working towards civic diploma seals. The toolkit can be accessed on the NCSS Seal of Civic Readiness Toolkit web page at <https://www.socialstudies.org/advocacy/ncss-seal-civic-readiness-toolkit>.

## Current Status of the State Seal of Civic Engagement

The EEED administers the SSCE, including facilitating the insignia request process. LEAs submit online insignia requests annually, from March–June, with corrected insignia requests submitted typically over the summer and early fall. When completing the insignia request form, LEAs indicate how many students will receive SSCE insignias. LEAs also estimate the number of insignias that will be placed on diplomas, GED certificates, certificates of completion, grade eleven transcripts, or grade twelve transcripts. After processing insignia request corrections, the EEED organizes this data into a spreadsheet, which is posted on the CDE SSCE web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/hssstateseal.asp> in the fall. The spreadsheet breaks down statewide insignia requests by county, district, and school site, but does not provide information on individual students.

The table below includes the total number of insignias requested for each full school year that insignias have been available, as well as the number of insignias that were affixed to each eligible document. Percentages included to the right of each number represent the proportion of all insignia requests that were affixed to each document type. Data from the 2022–23 school year will be available and posted online in the fall of 2023.

### State Seal of Civic Engagement Statewide Insignia Requests

| **Year** | **2021–22** | **2020–21** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Diplomas | 8,354 (82.68%) | 4,794 (89.46%) |
| GED Certificates | 0 (0%) | 6 (0.11%) |
| Certificates of Completion | 59 (0.58%) | 7 (0.13%) |
| Transcripts (Grades Eleven and Twelve) | 1,691 (16.74%) | 552 (10.3%) |
| **Total** | **10,104** *(25 counties, 65 districts, 181 schools)* | **5,359** *(16 counties, 28 school districts, 103 schools)* |

For the 2021–22 school year, the majority of insignias placed on transcripts were affixed to grade twelve transcripts. Grade twelve transcripts received 1,630 of the 1,691 insignias placed on transcripts, with the remaining 61 insignias being affixed to grade eleven transcripts. This data is not available for the 2020–21 school year, but it is likely that the insignia distribution for transcripts is similar.

A map showing the location of LEAs that requested SSCE insignias for the 2022 school year is available at <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1dxlrxu_Sxh78evaIsfOlMOLesA4jmcc&usp=sharing>.

### 2021–22 Insignia Request Highlights

The 2021–22 school year saw an overall increase in the number of insignias requested, as well as the number of LEAs requesting insignias. Although two counties that requested insignias in 2021 did not submit requests in 2022, eleven additional counties submitted requests for the first time in 2022.

| **Counties that requested insignias in 2021 and 2022** | **Counties that requested insignias in 2021, but not 2022** | **New county requests for 2022** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Alameda 2. Contra Costa 3. Humboldt 4. Los Angeles 5. Monterey 6. Napa 7. Orange 8. Riverside 9. San Bernardino 10. San Diego 11. Stanislaus 12. Tulare 13. Ventura 14. Yolo | 1. Kern 2. Santa Barbara | 1. Butte 2. Fresno 3. Lake 4. Madera 5. Placer 6. Sacramento 7. San Joaquin 8. San Luis Obispo 9. Santa Clara 10. Solano 11. Sonoma |

Similarly, while 2022 saw an increase in the number of LEAs requesting insignias, several LEAs that requested in 2021 did not request in 2022:

* Alameda: Alameda USD and Hayward USD
* Los Angeles: San Marino USD
* Monterey: South Monterey County Joint UHSD
* Orange: Irvine USD
* San Bernardino: Sage Oak Charter School
* San Diego: San Diego USD
* Tulare: Dinuba USD and Woodlake USD

Nevertheless, almost all of these counties saw new districts requesting insignias in 2022. Of this list, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, and Tulare counties submitted more requests in 2022 than in 2021.

Additionally, in 2022, the Leveraging Equity & Access in Democratic Education Initiative at University of California (UC) Los Angeles and UC Riverside published *Breaking New Ground with California’s State Seal of Civic Engagement—Lessons from Year 1*[[1]](#footnote-2). The report explores the efforts of early adopters and provides themes and recommendations for LEAs working to implement the SSCE locally. Efforts made at the county and regional levels are also highlighted.

### State Seal of Civic Engagement Data Collection and the College and Career Indicator

During discussion of the draft SSCE criteria presented for review and feedback at the July 2019 SBE meeting, SBE members suggested considering the addition of the SSCE into the College/Career Indicator (CCI). After the meeting, staff from the EEED and the Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division (AMARD) met to further discuss the inclusion of the SSCE in the accountability system. Both divisions agreed that the draft recommended criteria and guidance would need to be revised to provide the standardization necessary to include the SSCE as a state indicator. This standardization is required to ensure that the measure is valid, reliable, and fair.

In August 2019, CDE staff communicated these issues in an Information Memorandum, titled “Considerations for Including the SSCE in the College/Career Indicator.” The CDE recommended that the SBE proceed with discussion to adopt the revised proposed criteria to use for awarding a “Basic” SSCE to ensure that as many students as possible have the opportunity to earn the SSCE as soon as possible, as required by statute. The CDE further recommended that the SBE consider exploring development of an “Advanced” SSCE that could be standardized for incorporation into the CCI in the future.

On March 11, 2020, the AMARD presented an item to the SBE putting forward plans and proposed changes for the 2020 Dashboard. This item noted the plan to begin the work on how to incorporate the SSCE into the CCI.

On September 10, 2020, while adopting SSCE statewide criteria, the SBE directed the CDE to determine how to incorporate civic engagement into the CCI. (Please see the SSCE Recommended Criteria for more information at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr20/documents/sep20item05rev.docx>). Since then, the AMARD and EEED have convened a Civic Engagement Work Group (CEWG) to discuss development of a civic engagement measure within the CCI. The CEWG has met virtually several times since August 2020, including in August 2022. During these meetings, the CDE has provided the CEWG updates on the SSCE insignia requests from LEAs along with issues and considerations related to shifting the collection of the insignia to the student-level. Additionally, the CEWG began discussing possible placement criteria (i.e., Prepared and Approaching Prepared).

**Note: Without access to student-level data, the following section is intended to begin conversations around the options for incorporating the SSCE into the CCI. Once student-level data is available, the CDE can validate these options through data simulations.** The initial considerations of the CEWG would bring this measure in as a “plus criterion.” This would mean that students who earn the SSCE would be placed in Prepared in the CCI if they also completed any **one** of the following criteria:

1. Completion of A–G coursework; or
2. Completion of a Career and Technical Education Pathway; or
3. Received a score of Level 3 or higher in English Language Arts or mathematics, and a score of Level 2 or higher in the other area on the Smarter Balance Summative Assessments.

For Dashboard Alternative School Status Schools, the CEWG discussed placing students who earn the SSCE in Prepared if they meet **one** of the additional criteria below:

1. Complete a Career Technical Education (CTE) course (one semester, two quarters, or two trimester) with a grade of C- or better; or
2. Complete a CTE pathway.

This approach would have the following benefits:

* Encourages all districts to implement the SSCE, since it would be one of the criteria in the CCI
* Indicates that civic engagement is important for all students regardless of whether they are college or career bound
* Provides the opportunity for all students who earn the seal to be counted as prepared in the CCI
* Does not set one standard for students to earn a SSCE and another standard for civic engagement in the CCI
* Does not rely on standardized assessments
* Leaves open the possibility that the SSCE can be added as a plus to new career measures when they are collected in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) (e.g., Student-Led Enterprise)

While the data collection for both the civic engagement measure and the industry certification measure were planned for the 2021–22 school year, this was suspended to allow the CALPADS to undergo a re-architecture of its infrastructure. The CEWG, including EEED and AMARD, are continuing to meet periodically to review ongoing updates to CALPADS and to further develop a plan to incorporate civic engagement and the SSCE into the CCI.

## State Seal of Civic Engagement Implementation Issues to Consider

### Ensuring Accurate State Seal of Civic Engagement Insignia Request Data

Statewide SSCE insignia request data is drawn from the online, self-reported insignia requests that LEAs submit. In this form, LEAs indicate the number of insignias that they will need, and estimate how many insignias will be affixed to each type of eligible document. In making these requests, LEAs do not identify the specific students anticipated to receive the SSCE insignia and this data is not collected via the CALPADS.

Many LEAs estimate the number of insignias they need in the spring, because students may still be working towards their SSCE when insignias are ordered. Alternatively, some students who expect to earn an SSCE may not ultimately earn one. Essentially, many LEAs end up with additional insignias, or the insignias are placed on documents at different amounts than were estimated in the original insignia request.

This creates problems with the accuracy of insignia request data, identified by both analyzing SSCE insignia request data, and also through conversations with LEAs regarding their experiences implementing the SSCE. For instance, several districts ended up with excess insignias from the 2021 school year; rather than correcting those requests, they requested fewer insignias for 2022, using up the excess insignias from 2021 instead.

The online insignia request form does have three options: (1) to make an initial insignia request; (2) to request additional insignias; (3) to submit corrections to previous requests. When there are issues with the request, the EEED asks LEAs to submit corrected requests. LEAs are instructed to use the correction option after they have distributed SSCE insignias to account for any discrepancies, but this can be challenging once LEAs slow down operations during the summer.

For the 2023 insignia request season, the EEED plans to significantly increase communication with LEAs before, during, and after the insignia request process to ensure that these corrections are identified and submitted in a timely fashion. The EEED may post official insignia request data later in the fall, in order to allow for time to follow up with LEAs for corrections at the start of the school year. The EEED is also updating the insignia request form to clarify instructions on using the form for corrections.

### Equity of Access

Although the statewide criteria were written to ensure that students from a variety of academic backgrounds may access the SSCE, SSCE insignia request data indicates that the majority of SSCE insignias are being affixed to high school diplomas rather than GED certificates, certificates of completion, or grade eleven transcripts. Similarly, the greatest concentration of LEAs that offer the SSCE still appear to be in more urban areas (Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, and the Bay Area) and concentrated in more affluent regions (such as Silicon Valley). The EEED continues to support local efforts to increase SSCE access and attainment in rural or otherwise underserved regions of the state, as well as in alternative educational settings, such as projects undertaken by Sacramento COE and Santa Clara COE.

### Consistency

Although the SBE adopted five statewide criteria, LEAs have tremendous flexibility and responsibilities when it comes to local implementation of the SSCE. This makes it challenging to analyze the SSCE consistently from community to community, including the quality of local programs and how equitably students are accessing the SSCE. The lack of a standard statewide civics assessment further complicates the issue.

Districts and schools are also discussing the importance of adopting common definitions of civic engagement, civic learning, community service, service learning, and volunteer work. States that already had civic engagement diploma seals, including Arizona, Virginia, and Georgia, require a certain number of volunteer hours in a variety of extracurricular activities and/or community service events. However, there is some concern that merely requiring a certain number of hours does not mean that a student is truly civically engaged, and some organizations and LEAs are working to implement a structure that allows for rich and rigorous civic engagement projects that extend over time and are linked with demonstrated civic learning.

Relatedly, the new California Serves program is intended to “expand access to high school graduates in obtaining a SSCE through service learning.” This emphasis on and dedicated funding for service learning as a path to earn the SSCE, as opposed to other forms of civic engagement, has further complicated discussions in districts and schools about what civic engagement as a path to the SSCE looks like.

### Accessibility and Rigor

LEAs have also experienced challenges with balancing rigorous civic learning and engagement with accessibility to the SSCE. While a key goal of the SSCE is to encourage civic learning and engagement for all students, including students who may not traditionally qualify for such recognition on the basis of academics alone, there is also an expressed desire from districts and schools to ensure that earning an SSCE signifies that the student has accomplished significant and measurable levels of civic learning and engagement. LEAs are continuing to try to develop flexible local programs that ensure the SSCE is accessible to all students while also upholding the requirement set forth in California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 51471 that the SSCE recognize “pupils who have demonstrated excellence in civics education and participation and have demonstrated an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government.”

### Staffing Shortages

It has become clear that in order to implement the SSCE locally, ongoing staffing resources must be dedicated at the school site, district, and county levels. As most of the responsibility for implementing the SSCE falls with LEAs, it is crucial to have dedicated staff year-round to provide information about the SSCE; adopt local requirements and optional local criteria for earning an SSCE; develop curriculum and train educators on the SSCE; develop and administer the annual application process; order, affix, and distribute insignias to eligible students; and maintain a record-keeping process. The increased attention paid to civic education nationally, especially as it relates to current events and controversial topics, places additional demands on LEA and school site staff and compounds implementation challenges experienced by LEAs. As many LEAs across the state are experiencing staffing shortages, local implementation of the SSCE may be hampered.

### COVID-19 and State Seal of Civic Engagement Implementation Year One

The first year of statewide SSCE implementation coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, making it significantly more difficult to implement the SSCE. Even given additional resources diverted to LEAs, implementing a new program such as the SSCE in a largely remote educational environment presented a huge challenge to many LEAs across the state. This continued into the second year of SSCE implementation, as many LEAs implemented new plans to bring students back into the classroom.

## Future Opportunities

### The California Serves Program

The 2022 California State Budget established the California Serves program (*EC* Section 51475), a collaboration between the CDE and California Volunteers. The new California Serves program will promote access to effective service learning for students in grade twelve, with the goal of expanding access for high school graduates in obtaining an SSCE through service learning.

In addition to initial work to review evidence on service learning, providing recommendations to the Legislature, and developing model uniform metrics to measure student progress towards civic engagement, this new program also includes an annual grant. Beginning with the 2022–23 fiscal year, $5 million will be appropriated annually to the CDE to award in grants, of up to $500,000, to eligible LEAs participating in the California Serves Grant program. This opportunity could potentially support LEAs in alleviating some of the challenges noted above. The funding could support an LEA to hire dedicated staff to support the SSCE development and implementation, and/or support the expansion of the program to underserved students. The grant opportunity also allows for LEAs to form a consortium to apply, which could catalyze more consistent implementation of the SSCE. This will also require continued discussion about the interaction between the California Serves program and the SSCE, specifically how California Serves participation could satisfy the service-learning component of the SSCE.

The CDE will develop and administer this grant in collaboration with California Volunteers, including developing criteria for the competitive application process, requesting data from participating LEAs, and awarding grants.

## Planned Updates for 2022–23

In addition to working with the AMARD to support the ongoing work of the CEWG and implementing the new California Serves program, the EEED continues to refine SSCE program administration.

For the past two years of implementation, the insignia request form has been posted in early March. LEAs request insignias from March through mid-June. The EEED is working to develop capacity to fulfill insignia requests earlier in the school year so that students who are graduating early and have earned an SSCE will be able to receive the SSCE upon graduation.

To improve the accuracy of SSCE insignia request data, the CDE will clarify SSCE insignia request form instructions to encourage LEAs to use the form to submit corrections as well as requests. The CDE will also communicate with LEAs throughout the summer to encourage submission of SSCE corrections after seals are distributed to students. This means that data may be posted later in the fall in order to allow for sufficient time for LEAs to submit any required corrections.

The EEED also continues to support local implementation of the SSCE and administration of the insignia request process, as well as implementation of the new California Serves program. This includes:

* Providing presentations on the SSCE and California Serves for regional communities of practice, teacher institutes, and statewide conferences
* Continuing to improve the annual SSCE insignia request order process, including facilitating corrections to SSCE insignia requests
* Supporting and promoting the work of partner groups who are developing resources to support SSCE, such as the Power of Democracy steering committee
* Continuing to support and promote the work of LEAs that are also working to improve elementary and middle school access to civic learning and engagement
* Sharing information about and resources to support the SSCE on the CDE history–social science (HSS) Twitter feed, the SSCE web pages, the Resources to Support Civic Engagement web page, the quarterly HSS newsletter, the SSCE group on the California Educators Together platform, as well as for statewide educator groups and other nonprofit organizations
* Working with the AMARD to facilitate the CEWG and develop additional criteria for incorporating civic engagement and the SSCE into the CCI

# Overview of State Civic Seal Programs

| **State Programs** | **History-Social Science (HSS) Course Requirement** | **Service Hours** | **Standardized Assessment** | **Capstone or Portfolio Project** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Arizona Seal of Civic Literacy (<https://www.azed.gov/diplomaseals/sealofcivicslit>) | Complete HSS courses with a minimum 3.0:   * American and Arizona history (1) * World history and geography (1) * Government (.5) * Economics (.5) | * Seventy-five hours community service * Two civic engagement activities | Arizona Civics Exam (60 correct out of 100 questions; based on naturalization test) | Portfolio with:   * Three civic learning programs (Advanced Placement [AP] exams, extracurriculars) * Two civic activities (e.g. meetings, voter registration) * Seventy-five hours service learning or community service * Written reflection | * Began in 2019–2020. * Local educational agency (LEA) required to hire a program coordinator to check, track, and report hours to the state. * LEA determines written reflection requirements. * Arizona Board of Education approves programs, engagement activities, service learning or community service organizations, and written assignments. |
| California State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE) (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/hssstateseal.asp>) | Local Decision | Local Decision | Local Decision | Local Decision | * Began in 2020–21. * Emphasis is on accessibility to all students in grades eleven and twelve. * LEAs determine local requirements based on statewide criteria, including grade point average, community service hours, portfolios, assessments, etc. * LEAs are encouraged to develop local awards at younger grades to act as local “pathways” to earning the SSCE at grades eleven or twelve. * Graduation is not required to earn the diploma seal. The seal can be affixed to a General Education Development certificate, Certificate of Completion, grade eleven transcript, grade twelve transcript, or a diploma (the student gets to choose which document). |
| Georgia Civic Engagement Diploma Seal (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wTZXMrf5Zs_5OQrbVOuqF4JwdVpsizM0/view>) | Complete HSS courses:   * American government (.5) * Economics (.5) * United States (U.S.) history (1) * World history (1) | * Fifty community service or extracurricular activity hours, 15 of which must be related to civic engagement (or enlist in military) * Fifteen hours civic engagement activities (e.g. meeting, mock trial, etc.) | American government basic skills test (56 standardized questions, 70% to pass, retake until passed) | Capstone presentation:   * Student explains how knowledge gained in HSS courses and activities contributed to civic engagement * Designed by the LEA, implemented by schools | * Began in 2018–19. * Recommend LEAs hire a coordinator to handle the capstone project, to track and verify community service hours. * LEAs submit a district-wide application (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OFb0YPDeF4bnOfkqd4o5bLC9KO0HQ2uD/view>) by October 15 of each year, as well as a seal order form (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeT4MYR1wjbST1O0fgY65ONpzqO-m586rX5XrPaupoV6vOiKg/closedform>). |
| Nevada (<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/81st2021/Bills/SB/SB194_R1.pdf>) | Required | Required | Requires passage of a citizenship test | Not required | * Implementation scheduled to begin in 2022–23, but details are not yet available online. |
| New York Seal of Civic Readiness (<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/CCCRWG%20-%20Civic%20Readiness%20Initiative%20Presentation.pdf>) | Four credits in social studies:   * Global history & Geography I * Global history & Geography II * U.S history & government * Economics (.5) * Participation in government (.5) | * Twenty-five hours service learning project * Forty hours extracurricular or work-based learning experience | * Mastery level on Social Studies Regents exams * Proficiency level on Social Studies Regents exams | * Research project * Middle school capstone project * Culminating high school civic project * Civics capstone project | * First year of implementation is 2022–23. * Students choose from a “menu” of options, which include options for middle and high school students on a variety of pathways. * Written reflections are built into many aspects of the program. |
| Ohio Citizenship Seal (<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Ohio-s-Graduation-Requirements/Ohio%E2%80%99s-Graduation-Requirements/Graduation-Seals/Citizenship-Seal>) | Demonstrate readiness in American history and government.  American history options:   1. American history (grade of “B” or higher) 2. Earn a score of proficient “3” or higher on Ohio’s State Test in American History 3. Earn a score equivalent to proficient (3) on AP or International Baccalaureate (IB) test in U.S. History 4. Earn a “B” or higher in appropriate American History College Credit Plus course.   American government options:   1. American government (grade of “B” or higher) 2. Earn a score of proficient “3” or higher on Ohio’s State Test in American government 3. Earn a score equivalent to proficient on an appropriate AP or IB test in American government 4. Earn a “B” or higher in appropriate American Government College Credit Plus course | * Not required * Districts can develop the criteria for a Community Service Seal and/or a Student Engagement Seal. | * Proficiency level on both history and American government exams | Not required | * First year of implementation is 2022–23. * As a demonstration of student readiness for next steps after high school and beginning with the class of 2023, Ohio state law requires that each student must earn at least two diploma seals. Beginning with class of 2023, the Citizenship Seal is 1 of 12 seals students can use toward two seals required for graduation. * Students who take Ohio’s Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities may also use a score on that assessment to earn this seal. * Ohio also offers a Social Science and Civic Engagement Honors Diploma. |
| Rhode Island Civics Literacy Act and Task Force (<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0076Aaa.pdf>) | Under development | Under development | Under development | Under development | * In 2021, Rhode Island enacted the Civic Literacy Act, which requires graduates to demonstrate civic education proficiency. * In 2022, Rhode Island established a task force that is advising the state on establishing a civic diploma seal that will include participation in a capstone project. * Middle school students are also expected to be able to earn awards for civic readiness. |
| Tennessee’s Governor’s Civics Seal (<https://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/governor-s-civics-seal.html>) | For schools and districts, not for individual students | * Provide instruction regarding our nation's democratic principles and practices, the significant events and individuals responsible for the creation of our foundational documents, and the formation of the governments of the U.S. and the State of Tennessee using the federal and state foundational documents.   Incorporate civic learning across a broad range of grades and academic subjects. | None outlined | Have fully implemented a high-quality, project-based assessment | * Began in 2019–20. * Provide opportunities for students to engage in real-world learning activities, including the secretary of state's student mock election and civics essay contest. * Recognizes schools and districts, rather than individual students, as a Tennessee Excellence in Civics Education School or District. * Other criteria: Provide professional development opportunities or student resources that support civics education. |
| Virginia Board of Education Excellence in Civics Education Seal (public web address not available) | Complete social studies courses with a “B” or better:   * Virginia and U.S. history * Virginia and U.S. government | Fifty hours in community service or extracurricular activities (or enlist in military) | Not required | Not required | * Adopted in 2023. * Have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions, as determined locally. * One in a series of eight seals that students can earn. |

1. Hodgin, E., & Bueso, L. (2022). Breaking New Ground with California’s State Seal of Civic Engagement: Lessons from Year 1. Research Report, Leveraging Equity & Access in Democratic Education Initiative at UCLA & UC Riverside. Accessed 11/4/2022 at <https://centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/leade/publications/breaking-new-ground-with-ca-ssce/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)