



CIVIC LEARNING AWARD

For California Public Elementary, Middle, and High Schools

Application and Overview

2015–2016

Civic Learning Award Overview

PURPOSE

“The success of our nation and state depends on educated, informed and active citizens and residents. [¶] . . . For *all* students in California to have access to a continuum of civic learning experiences starting in kindergarten—and to effectively respond to equity issues—we must embed robust civic learning throughout the K-12 experiences, both within and beyond school walls” (California Task Force on K–12 Civic Learning, *Revitalizing K–12 Civic Learning in California: A Blueprint for Action* (August 2014), pp. 6, 30, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/documents/cltffinalreport.pdf>).

OBJECTIVE

To celebrate schools' efforts to engage students in civic learning and to identify effective and replicable civic learning models in California.

AWARDS FOR PUBLIC ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOLS

Civic Learning Award of Excellence. Top-scoring schools receive a visit from the Chief Justice of California, a plaque, and an invitation to the California Gold Ribbon Award Banquet.

Civic Learning Award of Distinction. High-scoring schools receive a visit from an appellate court justice, a plaque, and an invitation to the California Gold Ribbon Award Banquets.

Civic Learning Award of Merit. Mid-scoring schools receive recognition from a local judicial officer.

SELECTION PROCESS AND RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES IN CIVIC LEARNING

The application asks schools to describe their civic learning practices and programs, with an emphasis on those that incorporate research-based areas of effective civic education, as described in the *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools* report from the Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools. A panel of experts from California will assess the applications for both depth and breadth of civic learning.

2015–2016 CIVIC LEARNING AWARDS TIMELINE	
Letter of invitation to schools	October 2015
Application deadline	January 19, 2016
Announcement of winners	End of February 2016
School visits completed	Close of school year

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/civiclearningaward.asp>

<http://www.courts.ca.gov/23201.htm>

Instructions and Selection Process

Thank you for your interest in applying for a civic learning award! Please complete steps 1 through 5 below.

Applications are due by January 19, 2016

1. **Review the Six Research-Based Proven Practices in Civic Education on pages 4–5 and the related links.** Successful applications will include an emphasis on these practices.
2. **Complete the cover sheet with signatures (page 6).**
3. **On pages 7-8, briefly describe up to three classes, clubs, and/or other educational programs at your school that incorporate at least one of the six civic learning proven practices, including a 500-word narrative description in an attachment.** Because the proven practices touch on various aspects of school life, from curricular to extracurricular, schools are invited to submit descriptions of as many as three classes, clubs, and/or programs that highlight their best civic learning efforts. For each, the application requires a short written overview and completion of several fill-in-the-blank questions. Please copy pages 7–8 for each class, club, and program to be included in application.
4. **Applicants are invited to attach up to two pages of supplemental material for each class, club, and program. Please label the page with the school name and city, as well as class, club, or program title (up to six pages, two maximum for each course, club, or program).** Examples of students' work are especially encouraged and may include excerpts from student writing and/or photos of student projects with explanatory captions. A link to a website or short video (up to three minutes maximum) will be considered one page. Please be sure that the proper permissions are on record for any images of students being shared.
5. **Mail, e-mail, or fax the application—including the cover sheet, description, and attachments—so that they arrive by January 19, 2016, at 5 p.m. to:**
Deborah Genzer
Judicial Council of California
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102
E-mail: deborah.genzer@jud.ca.gov
6. **Selection Process:** A panel of experts will assess the schools for the depth and breadth of their civic learning programs, as described in their application. Follow-up questions may be asked and a validation visit may be required.
7. **Winners will be announced by the end of February 2016.**

Six Research-Based Proven Practices in Civic Education

These proven practices are provided by the *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools* report, from the Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University, the American Bar Association Division for Public Education, and the National Conference on Citizenship. Full copies of the report are available at <http://www.ncoc.net/guardianofdemocracy>. Schools are encouraged to examine the rubric for more guidance on how to show evidence of the proven practices.

PROVEN PRACTICE #1: Provide instruction in government, history, law, and democracy. Formal instruction in U.S. government, history, and democracy increases civic knowledge. This is a valuable goal in and of itself and may also contribute to young people's tendency to engage in civic and political activities over the long term. However, schools should avoid teaching only rote facts about dry procedures, which is unlikely to benefit students and may actually alienate them from politics.

PROVEN PRACTICE #2: Discuss current local, national, and international issues and events in the classroom, particularly those that young people view as important to their lives. When young people have opportunities to discuss current issues in a classroom setting, they tend to have greater interest in politics, improved critical thinking and communications skills, more civic knowledge, and more interest in discussing public affairs out of school. Conversations, however, should be carefully moderated so that students feel welcome to speak from a variety of perspectives. Teachers need support in broaching controversial issues in classrooms because they may risk criticism or sanctions if they do so.

PROVEN PRACTICE #3: Design and implement programs that provide students with the opportunity to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction. Service programs are now common in K–12 schools. The ones that best develop engaged citizens are linked to the curriculum and:

- Consciously pursue civic outcomes, rather than seek only to improve academic performance or to promote higher self-esteem
- Allow students to engage in meaningful work on serious public issues; give students a role in choosing and designing their projects
- Provide students with opportunities to reflect on the service work
- Allow students—especially older ones—to pursue political responses to problems consistent with laws that require public schools to be nonpartisan
- See service learning as part of a broader philosophy toward education, not just a program that is adopted for a finite period in a particular class

PROVEN PRACTICE #4: Offer extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities. Long-term studies of Americans show that those who participate in extracurricular activities remain more civically engaged than their contemporaries even decades later. Thus, everyone should have opportunities to join school groups, and such participation should be valued.

PROVEN PRACTICE #5: Encourage student participation in school governance. A long tradition of research suggests that giving students more opportunities to participate in the management of their own classrooms and schools builds their civic skills and attitudes. Thus, giving students a voice in school governance is a promising way to encourage all young people to engage civically.

PROVEN PRACTICE #6: Encourage students' participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures. Recent evidence indicates that simulations of voting, trials, legislative deliberation, and diplomacy in schools can lead to heightened political knowledge and interest.

RELATED LINKS

Civic Learning Award winners, 2012–2015: <http://www.courts.ca.gov/23201.htm>

Civic Learning Award Rubric, 2015–2016: <http://www.courts.ca.gov/23201.htm>, under the Criteria tab

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Civic Education Initiative:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/civicedinitiative.asp>

Note: Applicants are asked to describe articulation with the California State Standards and Frameworks.

- California State Standards: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc>
- California Frameworks: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/allfwks.asp>
- California English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework table of all of the content areas that are in the ELA/ELD Framework, including civic education:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/elaeldvignapsnshots.asp>
- *Preparing Students for College, Career, and Citizenship: A California Guide to Align Civic Education and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects:*
<http://www.lacoe.edu/Portals/0/Curriculum-Instruction/CA%20FINAL%20Preparing%20Students.pdf>
- College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards:
<http://www.socialstudies.org/c3>

Cover Sheet

Please include this cover sheet with your application.

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

Street

_____, CA _____

City

ZIP Code

School District: _____

School District Address: _____

Superintendent Signature: _____

Principal Name: _____

Principal Signature: _____

Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Fax: _____

Best way to contact: Phone _____ E-mail _____ Fax _____

Number of Class, Club, and/or Program Descriptions Enclosed: _____

Grade Levels Served by Your School: _____

Number of Students Enrolled at Your School: _____

Name of School: _____

Name of School District: _____

Civic Learning Opportunity Description

You may submit a description of up to three different civic learning classes, clubs, and/or programs. Please copy this form for each submission.

- Civic Learning Class/Club/Program Description #: 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____
- Name of Class/Club/Program: _____
- Grade Level Involved (*please check all that apply*): K _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____
5 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____ 11 _____ 12 _____

SECTION A

1. Please check **ALL** of the following research-based practices that are incorporated into this class/club/program (*see pages 4-5*): (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____ (6) _____ other (*please describe*) _____.
2. What percentage of students will have participated in this class/club/program by the time they graduate from your school? _____%
3. Check the number of years this opportunity has been offered: 1-2 _____ 3-4 _____ 5+ _____
4. Circle the letter most appropriately describing the duration of the opportunity:
 - a. One event or one class period
 - b. Short term (2-5 class periods, once a week for five weeks, or one full week)
 - c. Mid-length (6-10 class periods, once a week for 10 weeks, or every class period for 2 weeks)
 - d. Long term (11 or more class periods, once a week for a semester, or every class period for a month or more)
5. What, if any, method is used to assess or evaluate students' civic learning
N/A _____ written _____ oral _____ performance based _____ other (*please describe*) _____

SECTION B

Include a **narrative description** (*limit of 500 words, in 12-point type*) as an attachment. Your narrative must respond to the following prompts: What is the purpose of this civic learning opportunity (class/club/program)? What learning activities (especially those that incorporate any of the "proven practices" in civic learning) are students engaged in? Specifically describe which of the proven practices the activities incorporate and how the practices are incorporated. What are the civic outcomes for students? If you are writing about academic learning, please include articulation with the California State Standards.

_____ Please check here if you have attached up to two pages of supplemental materials
(see instructions on page 3 for more detail).

SECTION C (*this information does not affect the scoring of your application*)

Briefly describe any school or district policies that support this civic learning: _____

