

Civics as Part of Social Studies Education

WHERE WE CAME FROM

Honestly, we couldn't tell you. We don't know how civics was taught in CB in the past.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

- We've been told that in elementary school, so much time is devoted to subjects that are on state tests, especially "text dependent analyses," that there is very little left over to offer explorations of other topics. We know that in high school, students take AGES: American Government and Economic Systems, in which they learn some of the basics of how our democracy is structured.
- Some on our school board have called for more civics education and we whole-heartedly agree.

WE BELIEVE

There is emerging evidence suggesting a correlation between high quality civic learning programs and increased civic engagement from students.

As the *2011 Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools* report highlights, students who receive high quality civic education are more likely to "understand public issues, view political engagement as a means of addressing communal challenges, and participate in civic activities." The outcomes are equally influential on civic equality, as there is evidence to suggest that poor, minority, rural, and urban students who receive high-quality civics education perform better than their counterparts who have not.

Our students need to know more than the three branches of government to make good decisions as voters. Our democracy is a beautiful achievement in progress, and we need informed, engaged, powerful citizens to maintain its strength and vitality.

According to Frank Luntz, Republican pollster: "Teachers have the most credibility as the most trusted source for civics education across the political spectrum—even more than historians and academics." We trust our professional high quality CB educators to guide the work as they are best positioned to support our children's learning.

Advocates for Inclusive Education

Position Paper: Civics, June 2023

WHERE WE WANT TO GO

We would like to see the following included in every student's Civics education (From: *The need for civic education in 21st-century schools*, Rebecca Winthrop Director, Center for Universal Education):

- Civic knowledge and skills: where youth gain an understanding of the processes of government, prevalent political ideologies, civic and constitutional rights, and the history and heritage of the above.
- Civic values and dispositions: where youth gain an appreciation for civil discourse, free speech, and engaging with those whose perspectives differ from their own.
- Civic behaviors: where students develop the civic agency and confidence to vote, volunteer, attend public meetings, and engage with their communities.

We suggest that CB convene a group of social studies teachers from all levels to create a scope and sequence for civics education k-12.