Utah Civic Learning Collaborative

An informal group of stakeholders dedicated to expanding and improving civic education.
PURPOSES

Build on partnerships & innovations occurring in K-12.

Help educators leverage research on best practices in civics & character education; curate curriculum content.

Connect nonprofits with classrooms to facilitate young peoples’ lifelong engagement in civic life.
BACKGROUND & RATIONALE FOR THE UCLC
Pre-History of the UCLC...

Commission on Civic and Character Education

Place for All conferences & traditions: 2018, 2019, and 2020

Legislative Efforts: Rep. Dan Johnson, PhD & Arundhati Oommen

Inspiration from similar collaboratives around the U.S.
53G-10-204. Civic and character education

"Civic education" means the cultivation of informed, responsible participation in political life by competent citizens committed to the fundamental values and principles of representative democracy in Utah and the United States.

"Character education" means reaffirming values and qualities of character which promote an upright and desirable citizenry.
FOCUS AREAS

Foundations of Democracy: Classroom Instruction

Character, SEL, School Culture

Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship

Experiential Civics, Academic Service Learning, Simulations
CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION: FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY

• K-12 may be the best place to learn about the foundations of our democracy.
• Remember what civic learning can—and should—be part of all social studies or even English and the digital arts!
• In the classroom students can learn civic skills. They can pre-register to vote by inviting in Voterise, for example.
FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY PRIORITIES

Professional Development: 4
Spotlight Effective Teaching: 3.5
Align with Portrait of Grad: 3
Mentor New Teachers: 2.5
In Service Directory: 2
CHARACTER/SEL SCHOOL CULTURE

• To succeed in life—not just civic life—kids must set and achieve goals, show empathy, and have positive relationships.

• Utah’s Portrait of a Graduate recognizes that school (and an affirming school culture) is a place where dispositions of character can be developed.

• School is a place for students from all background to find their voice—and respect students with different views.
CHARACTER / SCHOOL CULTURE PRIORITIES

- Civics into Early Learning: 3.6
- Promote Positive School Culture: 3.5
- Connect SEL Inside/Outside School: 3.0
- Spotlight Innovative Civics in SEL: 2.8
- E-News for Parents: 1.6
MEDIA LITERACY & DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

• Today social media is 1 of the engines of democratic life and activism.
• Yet, platforms are rife with disinformation, echo chambers, distraction.
• Help students engage in respectful, fact-based dialogue across partisan divides.
EXPERIENTIAL CIVICS  
SERVICE LEARNING  
SIMULATIONS

• **Service learning**: combines community service (ex: food pantry) with critical study of the social problems that give rise to the need for service.

• **Action Civics**: students choose an issue they care about and take real action on that issue.

• **Simulations programs** like We The People, Project Citizen, Mock Trials, and Model UN
Sample Achievements January-June 2021

- Engaged 109 partners
- Using Theory of Change model, Identified priorities by workgroup
- 8 Spotlights on Excellence
- Professional Development Calendar
- Debuted E-Newsletter for teachers: SPARK CIVICS
- Curated curriculum content for digital citizenship, media literacy, economic market education
- Partnering with My Discovery Destination on GooseChase App: *Family Civics Chase*
- Integrating input from student panel
• Civic Teaching & Learning Listening Tour: Visit K-12 classrooms to identify & feature innovative teaching practices; seek feedback on supports teachers need to make use of promising practices; interview students on what they need to become engaged in civic life.

• Engage new partners; continue building UCLC.

• Link curated curriculum content to core standards

• Following release of the elementary social studies standards, develop resource compendium.

• Supplement Directory of Nonprofits prepared to partner with classrooms with examples of project-based learning activities tied to curriculum content.

• Finalize guiding principles for experiential civics

• Build civic teaching resources into early learning core standards

• Spotlight positive school cultures “sparks of hope”
THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR

UServeUtah
Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism