

CivXNow Civic Education System Map

HOW TO MAKE K-12 CIVIC EDUCATION A PRIORITY IN SCHOOLS



3 CATALYSTS
FOR CHANGE

A STUDY OF
7,200 RESPONDENTS
AND 12,600 ANSWERS
MAPS A PATH TO STRENGTHEN
K-12 CIVIC EDUCATION THROUGH
THREE CATALYSTS
FOR CHANGE.

#CivXNow

Tufts
UNIVERSITY

Jonathan M. Tisch
College of Civic Life

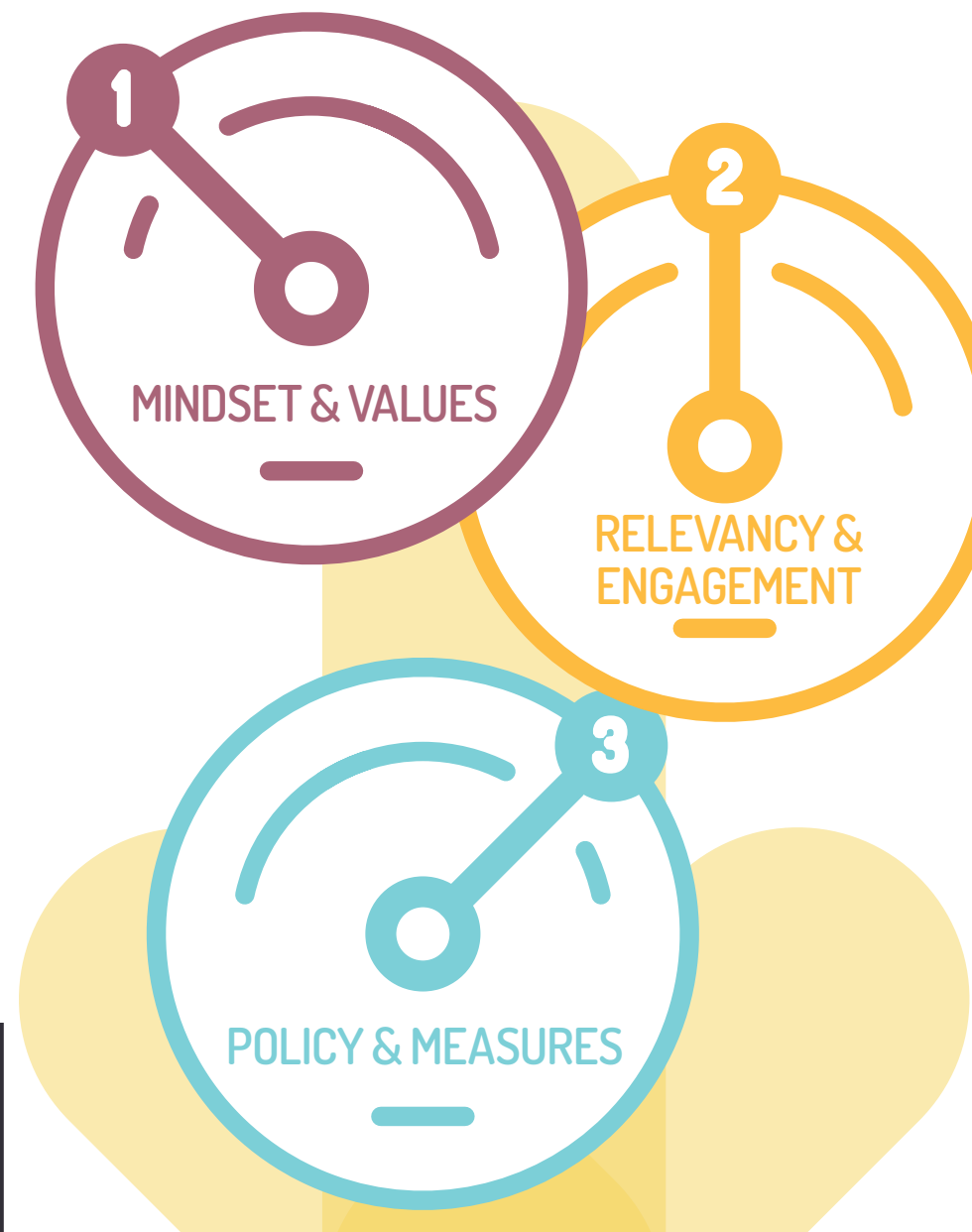
Civic Education Represents a Significant and Necessary Solution to the Challenges Facing our Democracy

But How do we Make Civic Education a Priority? What Levers do We Pull?

To answer these questions CivXNow conducted a study with over 7,200 participants. The study found 75 factors contributing to the poor state of K-12 civic education, and through 12,600 survey answers mapped those factors into 14 categories – and identified three key catalysts for strengthening civic education.

Systems mapping (or the 5 Whys) is an established methodology in the sciences to diagnose complex problems that is less subject to respondent bias than a survey. System mapping helps identify factors with high leverage to effect systems change.

The path for ensuring youth are more prepared and engaged in civic life can be understood through the factors of the CivXNow System Map included here.



Three Catalysts for Change

THREE FACTORS MAP A PATH TO IMPROVING THE OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND ENGAGEMENT.

- 1 MINDSET & VALUES:** We must increase the public's commitment to civic engagement and schools' civic missions.
- 2 RELEVANCY & ENGAGEMENT:** We must make civics relevant, which is effective both at making youth knowledgeable and helping change mindsets about the importance of civic engagement.
- 3 FEDERAL & STATE POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES:** We must add civics to education mandates and include civics in student and school accountability measures. These are key direct catalysts to prioritizing civics in schools.



CivXNow Civic Education System Map is interactive and free to use. To learn more visit: CivXNow.org/systems-map

Civic Education Outcomes

THE MAP NAMES TWO EXPECTED OUTCOMES IF THESE STRATEGIES ARE IMPLEMENTED TO IMPROVE CIVIC EDUCATION:

KNOWLEDGE: A classic objective of K-12 civics is for young people to obtain knowledge (broadly defined), including rights and responsibilities. The map suggests that many factors would help improve youth civic knowledge. In turn, more knowledgeable youth would allow civics to address complex current topics better.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: The purposes of civic education include encouraging civic engagement by young people: voting, and responsible participation in civil society. The map suggests that youth would be more civically engaged if schools made civics more of a priority and if they were more effective institutions. Funding would also help. The map further suggests that more youth engagement would lead to more knowledge.



The map shows three factors are directly connected to youth civic knowledge and engagement:

1. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Professional development for teachers will drive whether civics is taught well, and ultimately, whether youth are knowledgeable.

2. CURRENT AND CONTENTIOUS ISSUES: Civics must teach students to do what Americans are arguably worst at doing right now: holding productive discussions of current issues on which people disagree.

3. FUNDING: Respondents drew more connections involving funding than any other factor.

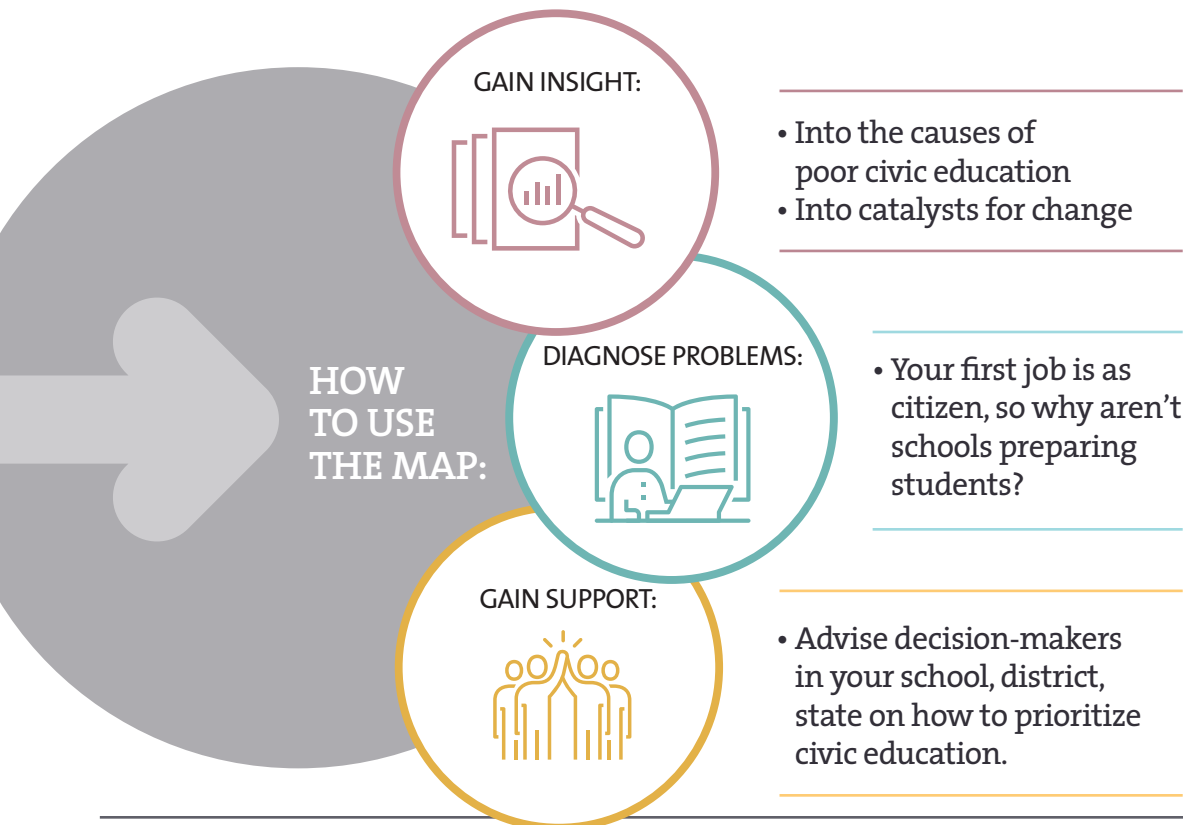
Factors Without Leverage

THE MAP SHOWS SOME FACTORS ARE IMPORTANT, BUT DO NOT HAVE MUCH INFLUENCE IN IMPROVING CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND ENGAGEMENT:

COMBATING BIAS: In a world of political polarization, bias, and incivility, teachers need space to teach controversial issues but must also avoid demonstrating biases of their own. This cluster is about navigating that difficult political context so that students learn to reason, deliberate, and act well.



HEALTHY CIVIC LIFE: The map suggests that better K-12 civics would improve the civic climate for all Americans (including adults). However, respondents did not see a strong connection in the opposite direction.



SIGN THE PLEDGE AND ADD YOUR VOICE.

CivXNow.org/pledge

SURVEY RESPONDENTS



K-12 CIVICS TEACHERS



PROFESSIONALS FROM CIVICS ORGANIZATIONS



CURRENT K-12 STUDENTS



ADULT CIVIC EDUCATORS



PARENTS, ACADEMIC EXPERTS, PHILANTHROPIC LEADERS, AND POLICYMAKERS

Map authored by:

Dr. Peter Levine, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor, Tufts University Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life, Louise Dubé, Executive Director, iCivics and Sarah Shugars, Ph.D. Candidate of Network Science, Northeastern University

This project was inspired by the work of 100kin10.

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Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life

THANK YOU TO THE ENTIRE COALITION FOR THEIR SUPPORT DISTRIBUTING THE SURVEY TO THEIR NETWORKS AND TO THESE FUNDING PARTNERS:

