

## RECOMMENDATIONS

---

This report concludes with numerous recommendations for schools and school systems, state and national policymakers, colleges and universities, researchers, and private funders. Following are some major recommendations in brief form:

- 1 **Schools** should work with state education departments and local school district officials to develop and establish civic education curricula based on combinations of the six promising approaches noted above. These curricula should be parts of every student's school experience at every grade level.
- 2 **School administrators** should allow and encourage educators to facilitate discussions of complex and/or controversial current events and issues in the classroom.
- 3 **The federal government** should increase the amount of federal funding available to states for civic education. The government should further consider establishing a new federal entity with responsibility for civic education, perhaps a "National Civic Education Foundation," which would commission research on civic education, encourage the development of model programs, help design and implement curricula, and serve as a national clearinghouse on civic education for teachers and schools across the country.
- 4 **Standards should be implemented for civic education.** This can be done by 1) more frequently offering the National Assessment of Educational Progress's (NAEP) Civics Assessment, in states as well as nationally, and/or 2) reexamining existing state social studies and civic education standards with a goal of ensuring that the promising approaches and goals of civic education outlined in this report are realized by the establishment of supportive standards and curricular policies.
- 5 **Schools of education** should strengthen the civic dimensions of pre-service and in-service education for teachers and administrators. Those who are already working in schools should also be offered the opportunity to acquire continuing education credits related to civic education so that they can become more skilled at inculcating the civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes students need to become responsible and engaged citizens.
- 6 **Researchers** should develop and implement more rigorous studies (including longitudinal research) about effective service-learning and other civic education approaches. Researchers should also develop indicators for civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes at each phase of K-12 schooling.
- 7 **Funders** should support efforts to build national and state coalitions of educators, policymakers, parents, young people, and community leaders to advocate for better and more civic education in schools.

This report provides a framework for creating more effective civic education programs in our schools and represents, for the first time, consensus about this issue among the nation's leading scholars and practitioners. We hope that the concrete recommendations provided in this report will help us move from rhetorical expressions of concern about youth civic engagement to implementing richer and more comprehensive civic education programs that will not only help schools fulfill their civic missions, but also ensure that young Americans have the tools they need to participate fully in the political and civic processes that are the hallmark of U.S. democracy.