

Minnesota Civic Education Coalition

“Knowledge of our system of governance and our rights and responsibilities as citizens is not passed along through the gene pool. Each generation of Americans must be taught these basics.” ~ Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor

Preserving Minnesota’s History and Culture Heritage through Civic Education

Raising good citizens doesn't happen by chance. Just like we teach children to brush their teeth, eat healthy foods, exercise and get enough sleep, we also need to help them develop the knowledge, skills and motivation to participate in civic life.

Civic education provides citizens with knowledge about our system of government and the rights and responsibilities that are anchored in the history and documents that form our representative democracy. Our common civic cultural heritage unites all Minnesotans, regardless of who we are or where we are from.

The Minnesota Civic Education Coalition* is committed to preserving Minnesota’s civic heritage by teaching civic knowledge, skills and traditions to the next generation. With high voter turnout, honest elections and elected officials, and engaged citizens, Minnesota is the envy of other states. But this outcome doesn’t happen by accident.



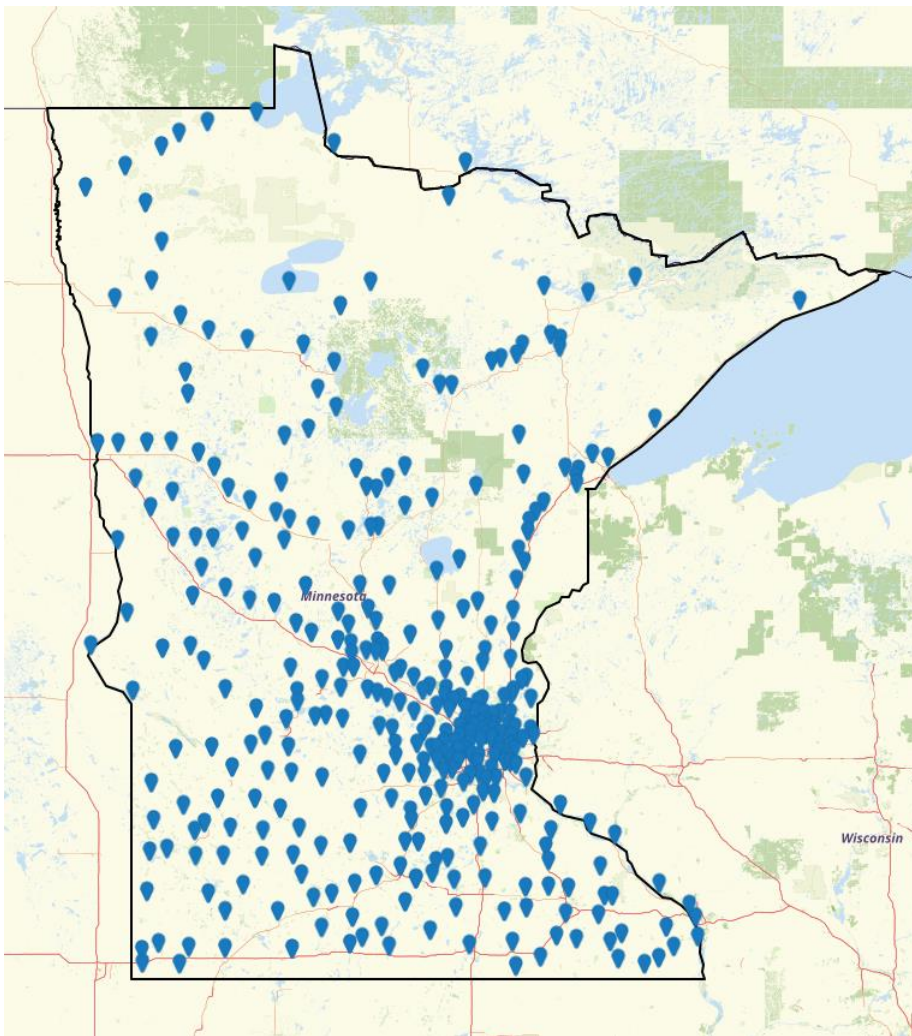
2022-2023 Request

The Minnesota Civic Education Coalition is requesting \$300,000 each year from the Legacy Committee, Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (HF1470). Funding will support civic education programs for the civic and cultural development of Minnesota youth ages 18 and under. Programming will focus on:

- The constitutional principles and the democratic foundation of our national, state and local institutions;
- The political processes and structures of government, grounded in the understanding of constitutional government and individual rights;
- The development of skills needed to be engaged and effective participants in today’s public life.

* The Minnesota Civic Education Coalition includes the Learning, Law & Democracy Foundation, YMCA Center for Youth Voice and Youth in Government. For more information, contact jbloom@teachingcivics.org.

Who Does the Minnesota Civic Education Coalition Serve?

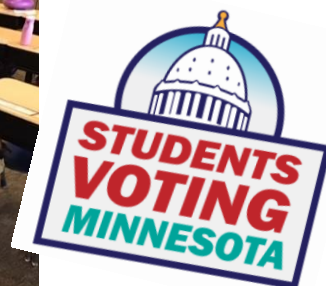
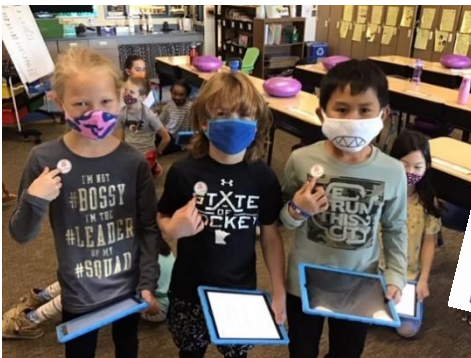


During the past two years, the Minnesota Civic Education Coalition has delivered programming in more than 400 Minnesota communities and supported civic learning for thousands of K-12 students statewide. Notable outcomes include:

- MN teachers and parents accessed government and civics lessons via www.teachingcivics.org more than 16,000 times. This represents a 61% increase fueled by the need for distance learning resources.
- Placing more than 2,000 student election judges in the 2020 election.
- Providing an authentic, 2020 Election-day voting experience for nearly 60,000 K-12 students statewide.
- Delivering professional development to more than 500 educators.
- Providing opportunities each year for more than 2,500 middle- and high-school students to serve in model governments at the state, local, national and international levels.
- Coordinating “Project Citizen” (1,000+ students) and “We the People” (400+ students), programs that teach students to effectively participate in democracy.

“ The whole school participated in Students Voting. Every student felt like their voice was heard and it validated their belief in the process. It was a great experience for them to be able to practice being responsible citizens so that one day when they grow up, they will be prepared to participate in the political process. ”

~ Greater MN middle school teacher



Select Minnesota Civic Education Coalition Programs



Super Civics

Super Civics recognizes the opportunity presented to K-8 teachers and their students to start building their toolboxes for civic learning. Each building block is essential to prepare a young person for a rigorous civic education in high school and full participation in the American experiment in democracy as an adult.

Super Civics connects teachers with tested lessons and strategies in the toolbox, as well as deepens their own knowledge of our system of government and the rights and responsibilities of the people who are charged with running it.

Project Citizen

Project Citizen provides a practical hands-on approach to learning about our complex system of government and how to monitor and influence it. Youth work together to research their community, identify issues they would like to address and then research solutions in the form of policies that require government and community involvement.

Participants have the opportunity to display their research and present their policy solutions to their classroom and/or community through local, state and national competitions.



Respectful Conversations in Schools

Democratic societies thrive on discussion, dissent and debate. Too often, however, our society provides poor role models for young people trying to learn the skills to be effective, active and responsible participants in that democratic society.

The Respectful Conversations in Schools protocol is designed to provide teachers and students with a tool for approaching controversial and/or divisive public issues while being responsive to the current political climate, particularly the increase in political polarization.

The protocol has been shown to increase students' leadership and social emotional learning skills, as well as strengthen competencies for success in college, career and civic life.