

EDUCATING FOR AMERICAN ★ DEMOCRACY

STAKEHOLDER BRIEF FOR PHILANTHROPISTS

WHAT IS EAD?

The Educating for American Democracy initiative is a new vision for the field of civic learning at a time when the perils facing our constitutional democracy require investment in solutions to rebuild our civic strength.

The philanthropic community has a significant role to play by making catalytic investments and leveraging public commitments at this critical time.

A NEW VISION

In 2003, CIRCLE and Carnegie Corporation of New York published *The Civic Mission of Schools* report, which assembled the available evidence at the time and set it as a research agenda.

At the heart of this report was a list of six “Promising Practices” for civic education that proved influential in both research and practice. In 2017, CivXNow issued a report by Peter Levine and Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg entitled *The Republic is Still at Risk* that incorporated amended versions of the six original practices, plus four new ones, for a total of ten, which were renamed as “Proven Practices.”

These documents emphasized pedagogy much more than content: the “how” and the “why” of civics more than the “what.” The *EAD Roadmap* offers the first comprehensive guide to content, while its Pedagogy Companion updates and builds on the work that produced the Proven Practices.

INDICATIONS OF PHILANTHROPIC INTEREST

Recently, Grantmakers for Education (GFE) framed emerging opportunities for philanthropy in education in response to the global pandemic upending in-person instruction, its accompanying economic crisis, a generational push for racial equity in education and across institutions, and a new presidential administration with divergent priorities from its predecessor.

In surveying its members, GFE found five priority areas for current and future investment, those that met the tests of urgency, opportunity, and ability for philanthropy to affect systemic change, and civic education was among them.

Specifically, funders prioritized “expanded civic education, both in and out of school,” revisions to U.S. history and social studies curriculum “to better include marginalized voices,” and “student voice in school and educational policy.”

The field of civic learning has seen several new entrants to the sector which had been all but abandoned in the recent past. This new interest is welcome as the scope of work to effectuate the EAD theory of change is significant.



VISIT

www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org
to download a copy of the Roadmap.

For more specific information about what you can do, click on “Take Action,” and look for the stakeholder brief that best matches your role. For comments or questions, please contact us at EAD@iCivics.org.

THE ROLE OF PHILANTHROPY

EAD is a new vision for the field that needs policy and implementation support. This vision can help propel civic education as a priority for our nation, making philanthropic investments more likely to succeed.

The goals of EAD are ambitious. Successful implementation will ensure that 60 million students access high-quality civic learning opportunities by 2030, defined as excellence in teaching civic knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors, and a diverse supermajority of students will earn aligned civic-learning credentials. Moreover, by the end of the decade, 100,000 schools will be civic-ready with civic learning plans and resources to execute them. Finally, one million teachers will be trained on Educating for American Democracy's core pedagogical principles, through exceptional pre- and in-service professional development opportunities.

Investments are needed at all levels and scales.

The *Roadmap* envisions that schools, districts, and states in our federal republic will adopt diverse approaches within a common framework. That means that curricula, materials, educational experiences, and professional development will have to be developed and evaluated in specific communities and states as well as on a national scale. A range of institutions—such as K–12 schools of all kinds, colleges and universities (as educators of future teachers and researchers), and museums and libraries—play important roles. Policies for civics and history education will be debated, enacted, and implemented at all levels: local, state, and federal, creating multiple opportunities for advocacy and public involvement. All kinds of philanthropies and philanthropists can be involved in realizing the vision of the *Roadmap*. Donors that make grants in their local communities can support locally-specific projects and materials; those that work nationally can enable national civil society to improve K–12 civics.

Opportunities for philanthropic investment in national civil society organizations include support for

- ▶ **Facilitating** standards work in states;
- ▶ **Developing** protocols for credentialing civic learning, including badges for students and seals for schools;
- ▶ **Creating** curricula, experiences, and resources that align with the *Roadmap*, particularly those at the early grades and missing perspectives on historical events;
- ▶ **Providing** technical assistance to districts and states for implementation support through a regional partnership infrastructure; and
- ▶ **Offering** professional development opportunities to pre- and in-service teachers as well as administrators;
- ▶ **Encouraging** and supporting research, evaluation, and key performance indicators.

Civil society organizations are also leading and supporting federal and state-based campaigns to strengthen civic education through policies aligned with the *Roadmap*. This grassroots advocacy needs additional philanthropic investment, with the potential of catalyzing systems change in alignment with the goals expressed by GFE members.

High-quality, school-based K–12 learning opportunities in history and civics for all learners are foundational to our nation's shared civic strength and are within our grasp over this next decade through fully-resourced implementation of the *Roadmap to Educating for American Democracy initiative*. Civil society organizations are critical to supporting implementation at the local, state, tribal, and national levels, and philanthropy has an urgent opportunity to affect systemic change and equip 60 million students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for lifelong, informed participation in our constitutional democracy.



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