



**Grade 8
Civic Action Project**

**Sudbury Public Schools
November 2021**



Agenda

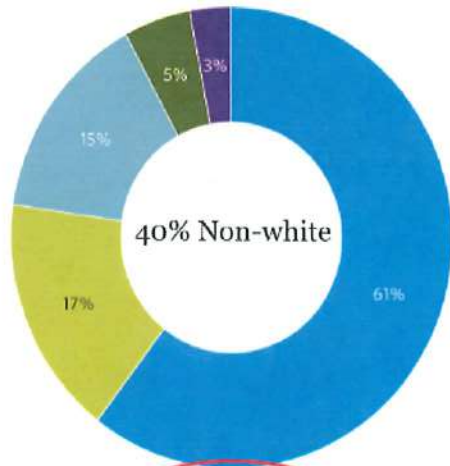
- **Background information**
 - **Goal**
 - **Purpose**
 - **Key components**
 - **Examples**
 - **Project stages**
 - **Stakeholders**
 - **Questions**
- 

Some Statistics:

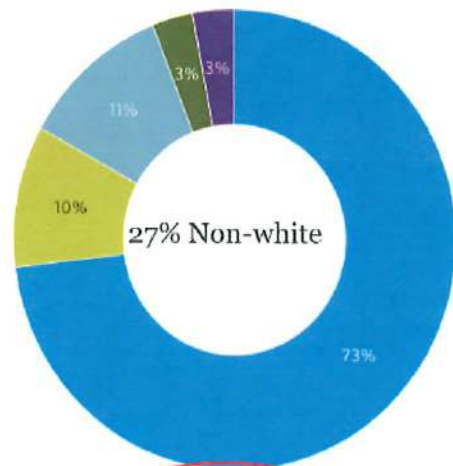
Younger Voters Were More Diverse than Older Voters in 2016

Among all 2016 voters in each age group, the percentage who identified as a member of each racial/ethnic group

■ White ■ Latino ■ Black ■ Asian ■ Other



Voters ages 18-29



Voters ages 30+



Some Statistics:


Only 56% of Americans can name all three branches of government. 20% cannot name any.

Among the top 37 democracies in the world, the United States ranks 32nd in voter participation.

MA Voter Participation for Ages 18-24 in 2016 was 39%, in 2020 it was 52%.

On the U.S. Citizenship Test, 90% of immigrants can score at least 60% correct. 33% of native-born citizens can and only 19% of people under age 45.

Currently, funding for STEM education is at \$50 per student, and civics education is funded at 5¢. This is a difference of 1,000%.



Some Statistics:

Forbes Magazine wrote an article on Feb. 21, 2020: “Will U.S. Education Remedy a Half-Century of Neglecting Civics Education?”



January 6, 2021

On November 8, 2018, Governor Charlie Baker signed the law stating: “Each public school serving students in the eighth grade and each public high school shall provide not less than 1 student-led, non-partisan civics project for each... Civics projects may be individual, small group or class wide”

Goal:


To independently engage in the Standards of Practice:

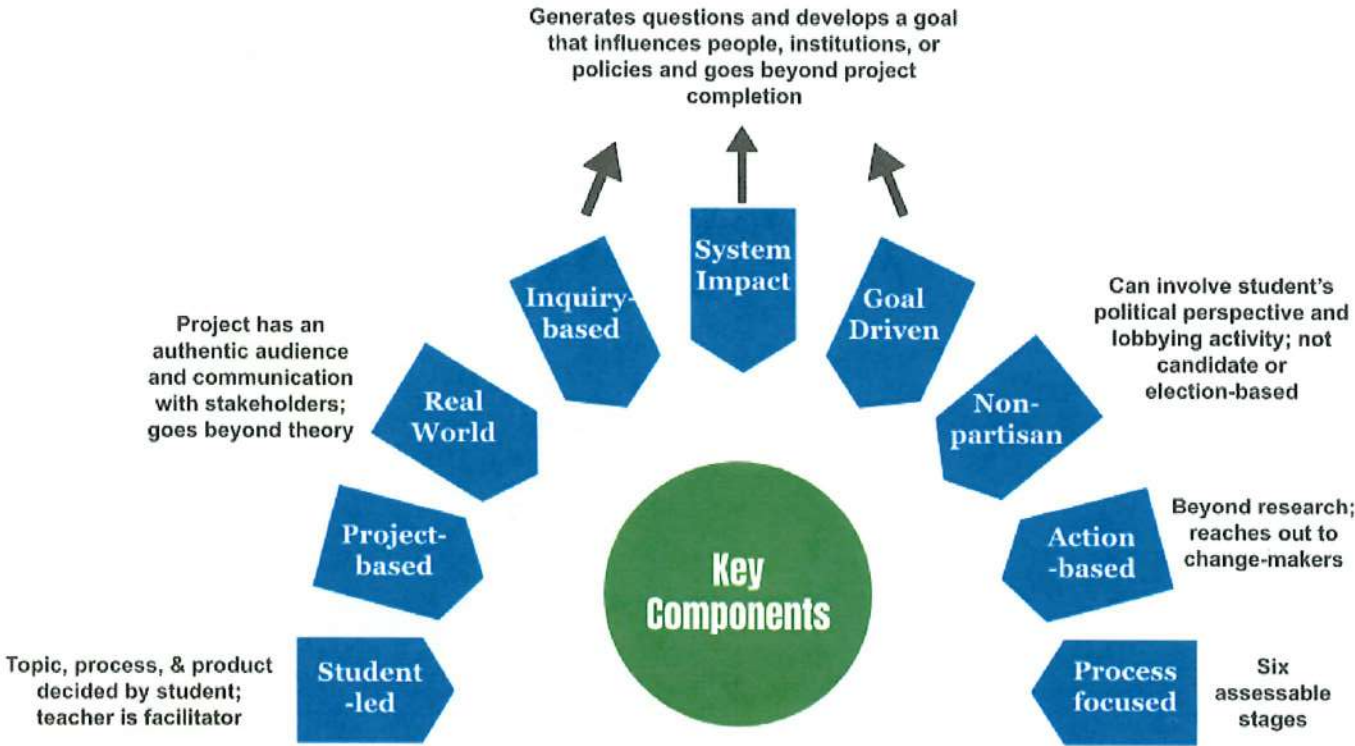
- I. **Demonstrate** civic knowledge, skills, & dispositions
- Inquiry-based { 2. **Develop** focused questions or problems & **conduct** inquiries
- 3. **Organize** information from multiple sources
- Connect to primary and secondary sources { 4. **Analyze** purpose & point of view; **distinguish** fact from opinion
- 5. **Evaluate** the credibility & relevance of sources
- 6. **Argue or explain** conclusions with valid reasoning & evidence
- 7. **Determine** next steps and **take** appropriate **action**

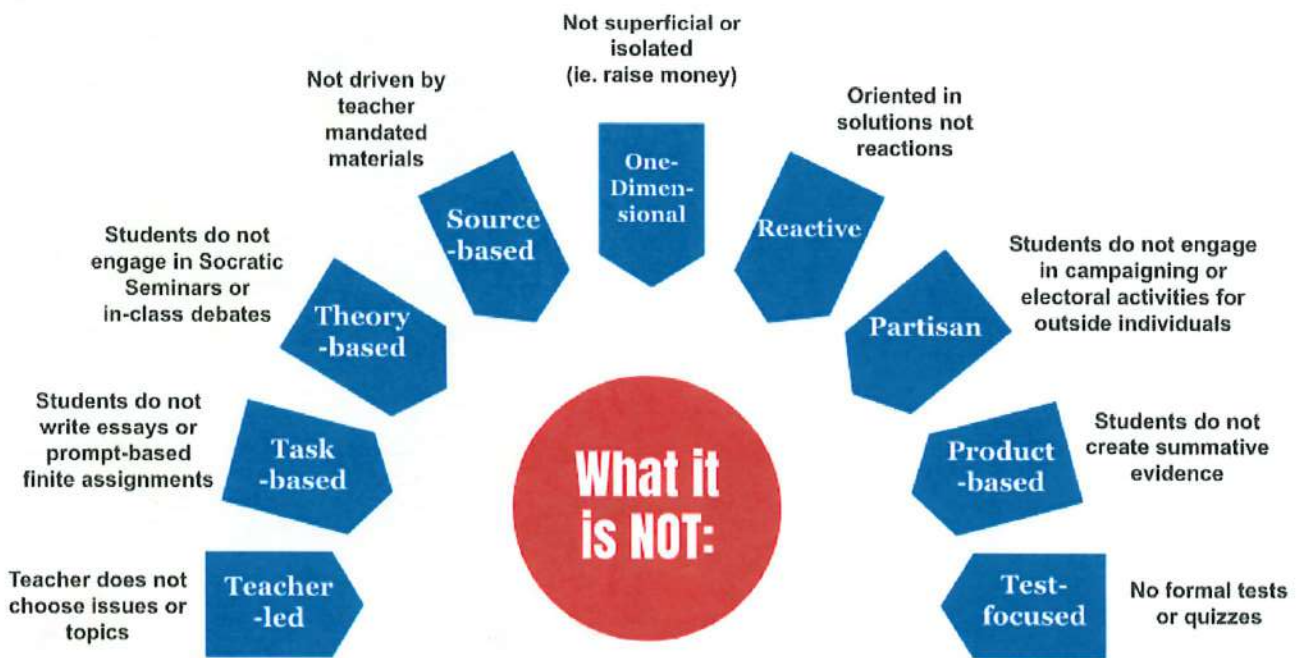


Purpose:

To serve as a capstone experience which will promote the ability to:

- Analyze complex issues
 - Consider differing points of view
 - Make logical arguments
 - Support claims with evidence
 - Engage in civil discourse with those who hold opposing positions
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the connections between federal, state, and local policies, including issues that may impact the student's school or community
- 





Focus Issue & Goal:

Substance Abuse: Limit the sale of flavored vaping products to adult-only stores.

Sample Actions:

Proposed legislation at the state level; increase education in Health classes; implement vaping “buy back” program; create peer education group

***The Lowell 8th grade students retained David M. Nangle 17th Middlesex, to sponsor Bill HD.1484 and it arrived at the State House in April 2019. A hearing was held on July 16, and Governor Baker signed into law on November 27.**



Some of the many (approx 50) Joseph G. Pyne School students that worked on a Teen Vaping Legislation project this spring stand with their teacher Michael Neagle on right, students L-R, Alexia Santos 15, Emily Haas 14, Madison Scott 13, Ava Sullivan 14, Nichollas Fusco 14, Julyen Martinez 13, Michael Dailey 14 and Michael Neagle (teacher), all students are in the 8th grade. SUN/David H. Brow

By **ELIZABETH DOBBINS** | edobbins@lowellsun.com | Lowell Sun

August 17, 2019 at 1:00 am

LOWELL — To learn about government, students introduced a vaping bill to the statehouse...

Examples:

Focus Issue & Goal:

Mental Health: Increase the number of Social Workers at their middle school

Financial Aid: Establish a scholarship program for youth sports programs

Environment: Lessen town's impact on climate change by eliminating the use of plastic bags in local businesses

Literacy: Establish town-wide 'book nooks' and secure free books to outfit them

Health: Establish a school-based food pantry to address student food insecurity

Music: Create a program to donate used instruments to low-income students

Recreation: Convert an abandoned courtyard into an outdoor learning space

Art: Run a program to create a tile mosaic with messages about inclusion & diversity



Six Stages

Stage 1: Examining Self and Civic Identity

Explore issues and topics for self, their families and their communities

Stage 2: Identifying an Issue

Identify an issue - involves building consensus and collaborative decision making

Stage 3: Researching and Investigating

Engage in research to develop common language, background knowledge, & possible root causes of the issue

Stage 4: Developing an Action Plan

Determine the best tactics to address the root cause of the issue - Three broad categories: 1) Developing an argument 2) Rallying support 3) Lobbying decision makers

Stage 5: Taking Action

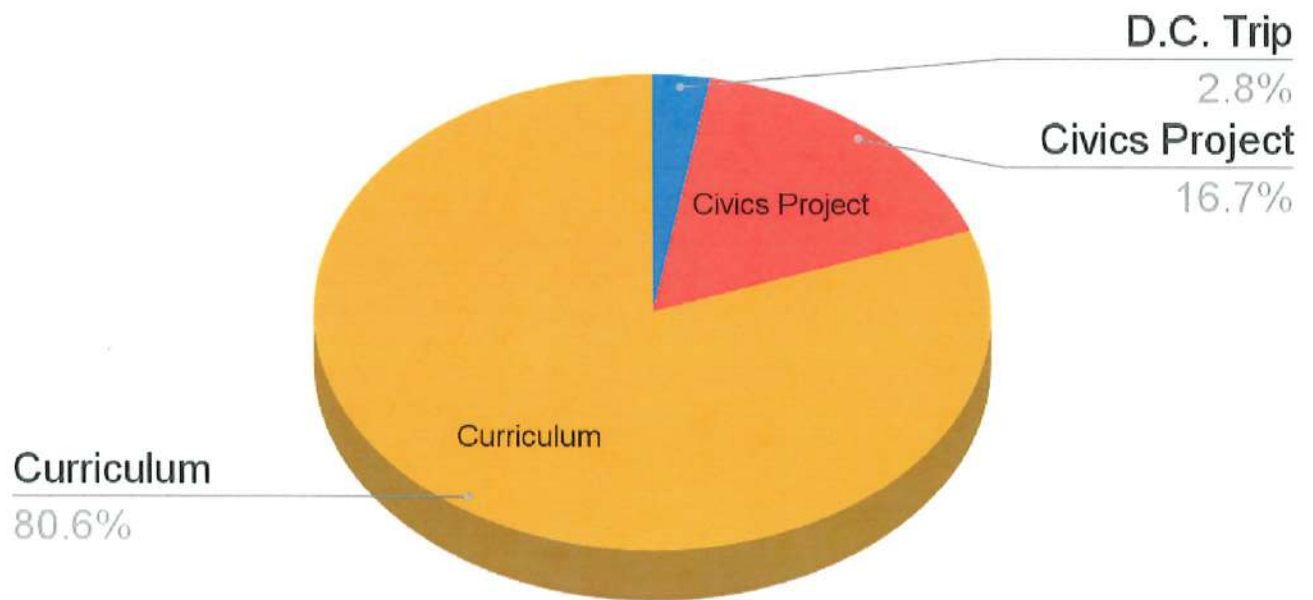
Move beyond the walls of the classroom to exercise their voice - This stage is most unique to each project

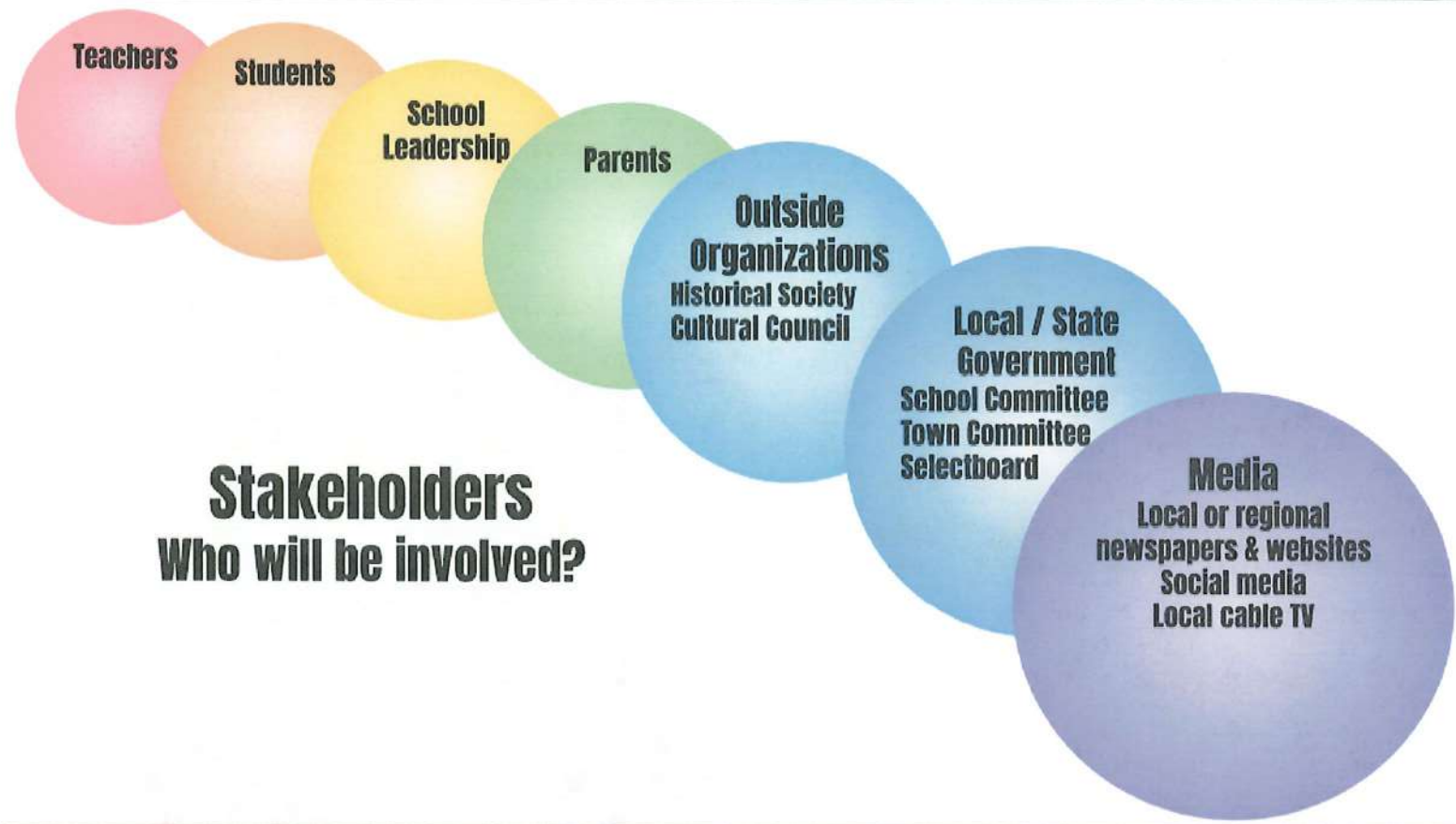
Stage 6: Reflecting and Showcasing

Ends with a final reflection and a showcase to support pride and ownership in the work - Opportunity to reach larger conclusions about civic engagement & citizenship

Success is not defined by the policy goal being achieved.

8th Grade Program





Teachers

Students

**School
Leadership**

Parents

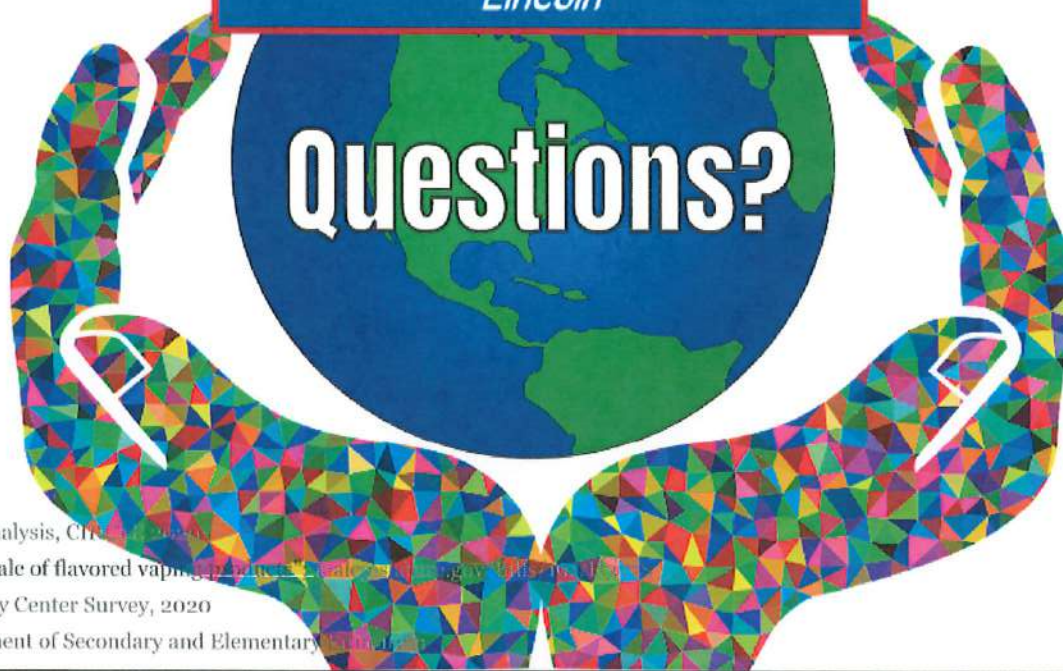
**Outside
Organizations**
Historical Society
Cultural Council

**Local / State
Government**
School Committee
Town Committee
Selectboard

Media
Local or regional
newspapers & websites
Social media
Local cable TV

Stakeholders
Who will be involved?

*The philosophy in the school room of
one generation will be the philosophy
of government in the next. -Abraham
Lincoln*



Sources:

- 2020 Millennial Poll Analysis, CTR
- "An Act relative to the sale of flavored vaping devices, e-cigarettes, and cigars." Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Annenburg Public Policy Center Survey, 2020
- Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education