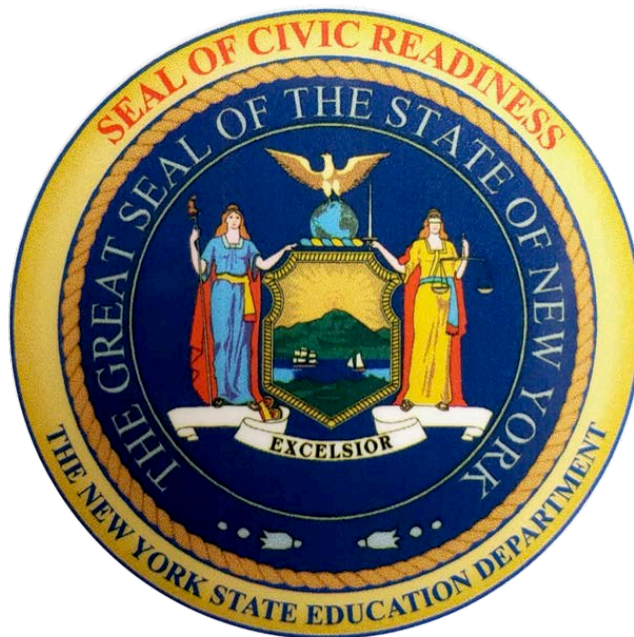


New York State Education Department

The New York State Seal of Civic Readiness Handbook



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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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The New York State Seal of Civic Readiness

Introduction

The New York State Seal of Civic Readiness (NYSSCR) is a formal recognition that a student has demonstrated the civic knowledge, skills, mindsets, and experiences necessary to become an actively engaged citizen. The Seal of Civic Readiness distinction on a high school transcript and diploma

- Shows the student’s understanding of and commitment to participatory government, civic responsibility, and civic values;
- Provides universities and colleges with a method to recognize and provide credit for attainment of higher level of understanding and skills in Social Studies;
- Demonstrates to universities, colleges, and future employers that students have earned recognition for their civic knowledge, skills, mindset, and experiences; and
- Recognizes the value of civic engagement and scholarship to school communities and society at large.

The Seal of Civic Readiness is an approved +1 Pathway to meet New York State diploma requirements. However, if a student has already passed five Regents Exams or has chosen a separate 4+1 Pathway, they may still earn the Seal of Civic Readiness as a stand-alone distinction on a NYS High School Diploma.

Civic Readiness Initiative Background

The New York State Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) are committed to civic education that empowers all students to make informed decisions for the public good as members of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. Civic education facilitates the development of civic competencies, which are needed for a democratic society to flourish. Through civic education, students learn how to identify and address problems in their school and community. Students also learn how to demonstrate respect for the rights of others, respectfully disagree with other viewpoints, and provide evidence for a counterargument. Civic education can strengthen the relationships of schools and students with parents, families, civic leaders, organizations, and community partners.

The New York Civic Readiness Diploma Seal builds on a long-standing foundation of civic education in New York. Since 1985, students in grade 12 have been required to complete a half credit course, Participation in Government or its equivalent, to earn a high school diploma. In 2000, the Governor and Legislature amended State Education Law by adding a new section, 801-a, to require instruction in civility, citizenship, and character education. Participation in Government guidance was published in 2002 and was updated in 2014 with the New York Social Studies Curriculum Framework.¹ The Participation in Government course “aims to provide students with opportunities to become engaged in the political process by acquiring the knowledge and practicing the skills necessary for active citizenship (as) ...participation in government and in our communities is fundamental to the success of American democracy.”

¹ <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/ss-framework-9-12.pdf> Participation in Government course outline begins on page 45.

In 2018, New York State included the Civic Readiness Index in the state’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan as a tool to measure the performance of schools in providing life-long skills to support student success. The Civic Readiness Index will be a component of the College, Career, and Civic Readiness Level. The College, Career, and Civic Readiness Level is defined as the percentage of students who are leaving high school prepared for college, career, and civic readiness as measured by diploma, credentials, advanced course credits and assessment results, career and technical education certifications, and other similar measures. One measure of students’ civic readiness will be the attainment of the New York State Seal for Civic Readiness.

In 2018, The Board of Regents established the Civic Readiness Task Force with the charge to define civic readiness and develop recommendations for a Diploma Seal for Civic Readiness and a Capstone project. In January 2020, The Civic Readiness Task Force, appointed by the Board of Regents, presented their recommendations to the Board of Regents. Public comment was invited from March 2020 until October 2020.

In September 2021, the [NYS Board of Regents approved the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway](#) for all high schools beginning in the 2022-2023 school year. One hundred and seventeen (117) schools were approved to participate in a pilot for the 2021-2022 school year. The manual was developed with guidance from stakeholders and the pilot schools to provide guidance on implementing the Seal of Civic Readiness.

Civic Readiness Definition

Civic readiness is the ability to make a positive difference in the public life of our communities through the combination of civic knowledge, skills and actions, mindsets, and experiences.

Civic ready students use civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets to make decisions and take actions for themselves, their communities, and public good as members of a culturally diverse, democratic society. Schools, therefore, must provide students meaningful opportunities to develop specific civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets—and to participate in authentic actions and experiences—that are necessary for them to function as productive civic participants within their schools, communities, states, our country, and the world.

NYSED is committed to empowering the civic agency of students and ensuring all students achieve civic readiness as a result of their Pre-kindergarten - 12th grade education. The Regents have also emphasized this position in their Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan. NYSED understands that the results we seek for all our children can only be fully achieved by incorporating an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of our work.

Civic education strengthens the relationships between schools and students, as well as students’ relationships with parents, caregivers and families, civic leaders, community partners, and among each other. The responsibility of ensuring that all students are civic ready is a chief aim of social studies education.

The New York State Board of Regents has adopted this definition of civic readiness. Eligibility for the Seal of Civic Readiness will be based on the demonstration of competencies aligned with this definition.

Civic Readiness Domains

Civic readiness is continuously developed throughout students' Pre-kindergarten - 12th grade education and should include focus on the following Domains:



Civic Knowledge: Demonstrate a fundamental and functional knowledge of government, law, history, geography, culture, economics, and current events. These may include inequities within our democratic system at the federal, state, and local level. Students should know how to apply this knowledge to different circumstances and settings.



Civic Mindsets: Demonstrate the mindset of a participant in a democratic society. A civic mindset is a commitment to democratic interpersonal and intrapersonal values, virtues, attitudes, and beliefs and informed actions that promote and facilitate meaningful participation in civic life. It is an understanding of self as part of and responsible to larger social groups.



Civic Skills & Actions: Demonstrates a broad array of skills including but not limited to critical thinking, analytic, verbal, communication, media literacy skills. Students participate in a wide variety of civic activities leading to a range of civic actions. Students practice such actions outside the classroom and inside school on a regular basis.



Civic Experiences: Participate in developmentally appropriate civic experiences. Civic readiness should be developed in a variety of settings and ways—inside and outside of the classroom, across content areas, and for multiple purposes. Civic Readiness should be promoted by engaging students in relevant experiences that include students as active participants.

Domain Examples:

Civic Knowledge

Fundamental civic knowledge in grade level appropriate forms includes:

- The structure and functioning of government, law, and democracy at the federal, state, local, and school levels, and how to participate therein;
- Civil and educational rights and responsibilities guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, the Constitution of the State of New York, and federal, state and local statutes and regulations;
- History, geography, economics, and current events within our country and in our global society;
- The impact of individual and collective histories in shaping contemporary issues;
- View and analyze history and current issues from multiple perspectives;
- The importance of civic rights and responsibilities, such as voting, volunteering, serving on a jury, and the importance of ensuring a free press.

Civic Skills and Actions

Critical intellectual and participatory civic skills students should develop and actions they should take in grade-level appropriate forms include the ability to:

- Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates, and how to respectfully disagree with other viewpoints and provide evidence for a counterargument;
- Participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, community, state or national issue, or problem;
- Identify, describe and contrast the roles of the individual in opportunities for social and political participation in different societies;
- Work to influence those in positions of power to achieve extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights;
- Fulfill social and political responsibilities associated with participation in a democratic society and the interdependent global community by developing awareness of and/or engaging in the political process;
- Analyze and evaluate news (news literacy), media, social media, and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility;
- Engagement in working toward the public good.

Civic Mindsets

Key civic mindsets students should develop in grade-level appropriate ways include:

- Valuing equity, inclusivity, diversity, and fairness;
- Recognizing the need to plan for both current needs and the good of future generations;
- Empathy, compassion, and respect for the views of people with other opinions and perspectives;
- Committing to balancing the common good with individual liberties;
- Demonstrating a sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local and/or national problems;
- Respecting fundamental democratic principles, such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the rule of law.

Civic Experiences

Examples of civic experiences in which students should be able to participate in grade-level appropriate ways include:

- Completing a civic readiness capstone or civic engagement project;
- Engaging in service-learning;
- Engaging in civil discourse around controversial issues;
- Engaging with news and digital tools, such as social media, responsibly;
- Participating in civic-centered co-curricular and extracurricular activities such as Model UN, Student Government, Debate Club, Moot Court, Student Journalism, or Mock Trial;
- Participating in school governance;

- Voting, volunteering, and participating in community organizations and governmental systems, such as community boards, youth advisory councils, etc., to promote continuous improvement;
- Engaging with local officials and government institutions through activities such as providing public comment before a government agency, or meeting with public and elected officials.

How the Seal of Civic Readiness Connects to NYSED’s Broader Missions

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In a diverse society, governed by a constitution and laws that provide for individual rights, liberty, justice, and equality under the law, civic engagement will involve exposure to a diversity of people and perspectives. Respect for and commitment to the rights of others, informed and thoughtful deliberation about societal, political, and governmental issues, consistent with the constitution, the law, and the rights of others, is a responsibility of all citizens. The Civic Readiness Initiative centers around creating positive social interactions across differences. This includes exposing students to multiple perspectives.

Social Emotional Learning

Civic engagement encourages students to explore issues in the broader community from various perspectives, helping them to reflect upon their own ideas and opinions, building understanding of themselves, their aspirations, and consideration of the diverse people and perspectives in the larger community.

Financial Literacy

Development of financial literacy is integral to student understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and participation in the economic and social lives of their communities. This includes understanding, assuming, and fulfilling responsibility for the financial support of oneself, one’s family, and financial obligations to the larger community.

Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education

The Culturally Responsive-Sustaining framework is intended to help education stakeholders create student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students’ abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking.

Criteria for the NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness

To earn the Seal of Civic Readiness, a student must earn a total of six points on the chart below. A student must earn at least two points from column #1 (Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge) and at least two points from column #2 (Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation) and an additional two points from either column. This chart is a menu of options designed to allow for flexibility. This is not a checklist. It is not necessary for a student to earn points in all these categories to earn the Seal of Civic Readiness.

Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge	Pts.	Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation	Pts.
Options		Options	
<p>1a. Social Studies courses required for graduation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain course credit in Global History & Geography I • Obtain course credit in Global History & Geography II • Obtain course credit in United States History & Government • Obtain course credit in Participation in Government & Economics <p>Or the equivalent of these courses, as approved by the local public-school superintendent or his or her designee or by the chief administrative officer of a registered nonpublic high school.</p>	1	<p>2a. Civic Skills, Actions, and Mindsets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a high school civic project that demonstrates civic knowledge, skills, actions, and mindsets, as established by the local Seal of Civic Readiness Committee (SCRC). (The culminating project is different from the Capstone and further explained in the Introduction to the Seal of Civic Readiness.) 	1.5**
<p>1b. Social Studies Regents Exams - Mastery level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate mastery level on the Global History & Geography Regents and/or United States History Regents 	1.5*	<p>2b. Civic Experiences Area I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a service-learning project that includes a minimum of 25 hours of demonstrated service to the community and submit a reflective civic learning essay/presentation. 	1*
<p>1c. Social Studies Regents Exams - Proficiency Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive a passing score on the Global History & Geography Regents and/or United States History Regents (apply safety net if eligible) 	1*	<p>2c. Civic Experiences Area II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate proficiency in an elective course that promotes civic engagement (as defined by SCR committee) and submit an application of knowledge essay/presentation. 	.50*

Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge	Pts.	Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation	Pts.
<p>1d. Advanced Social Studies Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate proficiency in an advanced social studies course (e.g., Honors, Pre-AP, AP, IB or College/University level approved by the school district; including dual enrollment courses or others approved by the SCR Committee. 	.50*	<p>2d. Civic Experiences Area III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in an extra-curricular program, or work-based learning experience, that promotes civic engagement or civic action for a minimum of 40 hours. Students must also submit an application of knowledge essay/presentation. This may be accomplished over four years of high school. 	.50*
<p>1e. Research Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate civic knowledge through a social studies research project. This project must be approved by the district’s Seal of Civic Readiness Committee. 	1	<p>2e. Middle School Capstone Project</p> <p>Complete the middle school capstone project that includes the essential elements listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an issue (local, state, national, or global); Apply civic knowledge, skills, actions, and mindsets to the issue; Present the overall project to the Middle School Capstone Committee. 	1
		<p>2f. High School Capstone Project</p> <p>The Capstone Project includes these Essential Elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an issue (local, state, national, or global); Apply civic knowledge, skills, actions, and mindsets to the issue; Engage in a civic experience based on the issue to influence positive change to the community (local, state, national, or global); Present overall project to the school’s Civic Readiness Committee. 	4

*Students may receive these points more than once.
** Students may receive these points no more than two times

Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided for all State and districtwide assessments administered to students with disabilities, as consistent with State policy. Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.

Scenarios: See [Appendix E](#) for scenarios

Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge

Students who receive the NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness must earn a total of six points, with at least two points from column #1 - Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge.

The options for this category include:



1a. Social Studies courses required for graduation: 1 pt.

- Obtain course credit in Global History & Geography I
- Obtain course credit in Global History & Geography II
- Obtain course credit in United States History & Government
- Obtain course credit in Participation in Government & Economics
- Or the equivalent of these courses, as approved by the local public-school superintendent or his or her designee or by the chief administrative officer of a registered nonpublic high school

1b. Social Studies Regents Exam – Mastery Level 1.5 pts.*

- Demonstrate mastery level on the Global History & Geography II Regents and/or United States History Regents

1c. Social Studies Regents Exams - Proficiency Level 1 pt.*

- Receive a passing score on the Global History & Geography II Regents and/or United States History Regents (apply safety net if eligible)

1d. Advanced Social Studies Courses50 pt.*

- Demonstrate proficiency in an advanced social studies course (e.g., Honors, Pre-AP, AP, IB or College/University level approved by the school district; including dual enrollment courses or others approved by the SCR Committee).

1e. Research Project 1 pt.

- Demonstrate civic knowledge through a social studies research project. This project must be approved by the District’s Seal of Civic Readiness Committee.

* Students may receive these points more than once. Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided. Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.

Civic Knowledge Research Project

1e. The Civic Knowledge Research Project - 1 point

Civic education must include the opportunity to gather, analyze and use information. New York’s Next Generation Learning Standards for Literacy in History/Social Science, Science and

Technical Subjects² outline three Grades 6-12 Anchor Standards in Writing that address the research skills required to build and present knowledge that are relevant to civic readiness. These research skills involve a careful examination of sources, requiring media literacy and thinking skills developed through both Social Studies and English curricula.

Civic Knowledge Research Projects must be approved by the School/School District's Seal of Civic Readiness Committee. A Civic Knowledge Research project may provide an opportunity for students to deepen their background knowledge and hone their disciplinary skills in preparation for the Civics Project or Civics Capstone. Research projects may be short-term and may be connected to a classroom project or an extra-curricular organization.

In a High School Civic Knowledge Research Project, students will:

- Examine a question (constitutional, historical, political, economic, and/or social) through the lens of civics.
- Use a variety of sources (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, primary, secondary) to fully investigate the research question and support the research thesis (argument or perspective on the topic).
- Present their research using written, audio/visual, oral, and/or multimodal formats.

The structure and content of the research project may depend on the context in which it is completed. Students may evaluate the impact of the topic being researched on the past and describe its connection to the present day. If the research project is completed in an Economics or Business class, students would focus their research on a U.S. or state economic policy and its consequences.

Examples may include:

Global History and Geography I & II

- Compare political systems in different global societies. Evaluate their legacies and implications in our contemporary systems and global relationships.
- Choose an enduring issue or set of issues and apply them to current local, national, or international situations. Students will examine root causes of the situation, evaluate how the issue has affected or been affected by people and how it has changed or stayed the same over time. By anchoring these issues in the civic readiness definition, students will analyze current policies and legislation relevant to the situation and evaluate their efficacy and impacts.

United States History & Government

- Choose a particular amendment to the Constitution (either a successful amendment or an unsuccessful attempt at an amendment), and research how that change was advocated for, organized, and voted on in this example. Students can also research the implications of this amendment through the lens of civics and how it impacts their lives or communities today.

² <http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/new-york-state-next-generation-english-language-arts-learning-standards>

Participation in Government/United States History & Government

- Throughout American history, citizens, organizations, and movements have been the driving force behind the most significant social, political, and economic changes that have occurred. Research an individual and/or organization, as well as the movement they represented and the issues they sought to change. Analyze and explain the historical circumstances from which the movement arose, background information on the activist or organization, strategies and tactics used by the individual/organization/movement to achieve its goals, any successes and setbacks that were experienced, and/or the legacy of the activist and/or the movement.

Economics

- What is the role that the U.S. government should play in decreasing economic inequality? Using quantitative data, examine the impact of government policies like the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or Title I on income inequality.

NOTE: Students may earn credit for the Civic Knowledge Research Project within their Participation in Government class, but this task must be separate from tasks they complete for Civic Participation. It is possible, however, that a research subject may inspire a student to pursue a similar issue for their civic project, service learning, or Capstone project.

How to Plan for a Civic Knowledge Research Project?


When planning a Civic Knowledge Research Project in an existing Social Studies course (such as US History, Global History & Geography, Participation in Government, or Economics), use the following guidance:

- Look at the units in the social studies course and consider the goals for each of the units. Choose a unit/units where a Civic Knowledge Research Project helps to support the unit goals for student learning.
- Consider choosing units in your social studies courses that provide sufficient time and purpose for students to conduct research.
- Frame the research question for students to conduct authentic civic research. For example, civic research questions could be:
 - Is the process for amending the U.S. Constitution fair?
 - To what extent can people and movements influence change to the U.S. Constitution using the amendment process?
- The research methods included in the Civic Knowledge Research project may include:
 - Analysis of primary and secondary historical sources
 - Interviews with key stakeholders
 - Surveys and analysis of public opinion related to the topic
 - Comparison of relevant social and political movements
- A Civic Knowledge Research Project should simultaneously allow students to meet the stated goals of the unit of the course within which it takes place and meet the stated criteria of the project (detailed above).

Another example to consider is using an inquiry as a springboard for a research project. See [Inquiries for Grades 9-12](#). Within the topics, teachers should seek to emphasize civics-based

issues. For example, students arguing the question: *How did the Industrial Revolution move people?* should analyze the development of policies and legislation and the impact they had on workers and society at large. The Extension Activities and Taking Informed Action sections of the inquiries are useful tools for including the domains of civic readiness into the research project.

Applicable NYS Social Studies Framework-aligned C3 Inquiry topics and compelling questions may include:

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Did Shi Huangdi improve China? How “magnificent” was Suleiman? 	Was the French Revolution successful? Is the Boxer Rebellion misrepresented? How did the Industrial Revolution move people? Can peace lead to war? What ended apartheid? Does development mean progress? (Analyzing modernization in African countries)	Did the Constitution establish a just government? What does it take to secure equality? (Debating Reconstruction) Was the vote enough? (Analyzing women’s suffrage movement) Who’s to blame for the Cold War? What made non-violent protest effective during the civil rights movement? How should the president foster economic opportunity? (Comparing viewpoints and policies of Johnson and Reagan viewpoints) Is anything new about today’s immigration policy debate?	Are students protected by the first amendment? Do we need the electoral college? Why is the Affordable Care Act so controversial? Does money matter in political campaigns? Who has the power? (Analyzing federalism) Is the Internet good for democracy? Am I going to vote? What drives you to the polls? Do any political parties represent me? Who’s to blame for the Great Recession? Should corporations have a conscience? What should be done about the gender wage gap?

Teachers and students may also use the [Inquiry Design Model](#) to develop their own civics-based inquiries and research projects.

What Makes for a Successful Civic Knowledge Research Project?

A 1e Civic Knowledge Research Paper asks students to:

- Examine a question (constitutional, historical, political, and/or social) through the lens of civics.
- Research primary and secondary sources that enable them to analyze the history of the topic, the structures that underlie or perpetuate the issue, and its relevance today.
- Evaluate the impact of the topic on the past and its connection to the present day.
- Present their research using written, audio/visual, oral, and/or multimodal formats.

Evaluation will be based on performance indicators included in [Social Studies Practice A: Gathering, Interpreting and Using Evidence](#). The full evaluation criteria and process will be determined by the SCR Committee.

See [Appendix F: Sample Research Project Rubric](#)

Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation

Students who receive the NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness must earn a total of six points, with at least two points from column #2 - Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation. The options for this category include:



- 2a. Civic Skills, Actions, and Mindsets 1.5 pts.****
 - Complete a high school civic project that demonstrates civic knowledge, skills, actions, and mindsets, as established by the local Seal of Civic Readiness Committee (SCRC).
- 2b. Civic Experiences Area I 1 pt.***
 - Complete a service-learning project that includes a minimum of 25 hours of demonstrated service to the community and submit a reflective essay/presentation.
- 2c. Civic Experiences Area II 50 pt.***
 - Demonstrate proficiency in an elective course that promotes civic engagement (as defined by SCR committee) and submit a written application of knowledge essay/presentation.
- 2d. Civic Experiences Area III 50 pt.***
 - Participate in an extra-curricular program, or work-based learning experience that promotes civic engagement or civic action for a minimum of 40 hours. Write an application of knowledge essay/presentation. This may be accomplished over four years of high school.
- 2e. Middle School Capstone Project 1 pt.**
 - Complete the middle school capstone project that includes the essential elements listed below:
 - Identify an issue (local, state, national, or global)
 - Apply civic knowledge, skills, actions, and mindsets to the issue
 - Present the overall project to the Middle School Capstone Committee.
- 2f. High School Capstone Project 4 pts.**
 - Identify an issue (local, state, national, or global)
 - Apply civic knowledge, skills, actions, and mindsets to the issue
 - Engage in a civic experience based on the issue to influence positive change to the community (local, state, national, or global)
 - Present overall project to the school’s Civic Readiness Committee

*Students may receive these points more than once. Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided.

Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.

** Students may complete the high school civics project twice during their 9-12 school years, maxing out at three points.

High School Civic Project

2a. High School Civic Project - 1.5 points

A High School Civic Project is a short-term project completed in either the classroom or as part of an extracurricular organization that incorporates some of the essential elements of the Civic Readiness Capstone Project. A Civic Project could also be integrated with a Service-Learning Project. The Civic Project will demonstrate the NYSSCR domains of civic readiness, reflecting students' civic knowledge, skills, actions, and mindsets. Civic projects will be approved and evaluated by a process established by the local Seal of Civic Readiness Committee (SCRC). Students may receive these points twice during their 9-12 school years, maxing out at three points. Students may complete their projects individually or collaboratively in groups.

In a High School Civic Project, students will:

- Focus on a civic issue or problem within a policy area that may be predetermined by the teacher or advisor. The civic project is focused on a civic issue or problem that can be interpreted in a variety of ways by a broad array of citizens holding various viewpoints.
- Analyze data, use primary and/or secondary sources of evidence related to the civic issue under investigation, and determine its impact on communities. Sources should be evaluated for bias and credibility. Sources can be provided by the teacher, advisor, or student.
- Evaluate at least two current public policies related to the issue or problem under investigation.
- Recommend and/or evaluate potential strategies to address the issue or problem that is under investigation.
- Communicate their project using written, audio/visual, and/or oral presentations.
- Explain how the project influenced their civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets.

Example 1: The teacher assigns a project that focuses on the policy area of criminal justice reform.

- Students are provided both quantitative and qualitative data on the Violent Crime Control Act and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (also known as the Clinton Crime Bill) and the 2018 First Step Act (passed under President Donald Trump) to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of these criminal justice reform measures. The teacher may arrange guest speakers (in-person or virtual) from law enforcement, prosecutors and defense attorneys, and criminal justice reform activists for students to interview as resources. Prior to data analysis, the teacher will instruct students on how to evaluate sources for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility, perhaps with the assistance of the school librarian.
- Students evaluate the effectiveness of the two pieces of legislation and develop at least one policy recommendation to improve the criminal justice system.

- Students persuasively communicate their evaluation of the pieces of legislation and their recommended policy. This communication can take the form of a policy paper, an op-ed essay, an audio/visual presentation, an oral presentation, etc. The teacher can encourage student voice and choice in the format that the students use to communicate their work.
- Students will produce a reflection on the most challenging aspects of affecting policy as a citizen. This will include advice for effective activism for other citizens that wish to impact public policy.

Example 2: The Student Council advisor creates a committee of students to provide student input to the administration on issues of equity and the school’s code of conduct.

- Students are provided with data about equity in schools, including op-ed columns representing a diverse array of views, quantitative data on disciplinary trends, the NYS School Report Card, articles on Restorative Justice, and other initiatives. Students may also interview school administration, PTSA representatives, and fellow students about equity.
- Students will determine whether the school can improve the school’s code of conduct in terms of equity and make recommendations, if necessary, to that end.
- Students will create a written report, an audio/visual presentation, or an oral presentation, etc. to communicate their recommendations.
- Students will produce a reflection on the most challenging aspects of affecting policy as a citizen. This will include advice for effective activism for other citizens that wish to impact public policy.

Example 3: Within a Participation in Government class, students chose civic issues that were important to them and worthy of investigation.

- Using the Question Formulation Technique, students arrived at civic issues they wanted to investigate. Civic issues pursued included how foster care policies impact children and young adults in the system; authoritarian versus rehabilitative prison systems and their implications on communities; public safety vs. personal freedoms in relation to local COVID-19 vaccine mandates; how to prevent gun-related violence in schools; improving health education to be inclusive of modern sexual health and welcoming for LGBTQ+ students; investigating wealth gaps and raising the minimum wage; advocating for stronger legislation to curtail the use of single-use plastics in the food industry; examining students’ first amendment rights in schools; and arguing for stronger policy related to civic education in NYS schools.
- Students used primary and secondary sources to analyze the historical and current backgrounds of their issues. Students evaluated current policies to determine impacts, strengths, and gaps. Students analyzed evidence and data to determine the impact of the issue on their local community including locally developed surveys and interviews.
- Students recommended/argued for specific strategies to address the issue or problem.
- Students reflected on how the project influenced their civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets.
- Students worked both individually and in groups and communicated their project using written and visual presentations.

Example 4: In a Participation and Government and IB Economics class, students spent multiple weeks pursuing the question: How can I use my civic voice to impact public policy in my school, community, state, or country?

- Students began by profiling the work of several young activists, ages 6-22, to familiarize themselves with their causes and methods for achieving positive change.
- Students grounded themselves in the language of public policy and explored the concepts of civic action and civic identity. Students grappled with their own civic identities and analyzed issues, ultimately choosing one was important to them and worthy of investigation.
- Students researched their issue using the following supporting questions to guide their work: What information do I need to understand the issue? What is the history of the issue? How are people impacted by the issue? What are the opposing viewpoints of the issue? What data (polling numbers or supporting statistics) provides useful evidence as to how the issue is a problem?
- Students researched the public policies relevant to their issues using the following supporting questions to guide their work: What information do I need to understand public policy related to this issue? What is the current policy on the topic -local, state, or federal? What are suggestions by political parties, interest groups, or others to change this issue? What are my thoughts, opinions, and arguments on the current policies?
- Students developed arguments for policy change using the following supporting questions to guide their ideas: What change do I want to bring about on this topic?
- Who do I contact to bring about this change? How do I make a compelling argument and or plan to make a change?
- Students ultimately organized their research and arguments into an 8-10 page paper that included the following sections:
 - Identify and Define the Problem
 - Analyze and Evaluate Current Public Policies
 - Evaluate Alternative Solutions
 - Develop Strategies and Solutions

What makes a successful 2a Civics Project?

A 2a Civics Project asks students to:

- Complete a project related to a local, state, or national civics-based issue in which they gather, interpret, evaluate, and use evidence to better understand the impact of the issue on their community or other communities.
- Identify, describe, and evaluate at least two current strategies, policies and legislation that currently address the issue.
- Develop evidence-based claims and argue for specific recommendations, strategies or improvements that address the issue.
- Communicate their findings using written, audio/ visual, oral, and/or multimodal presentation
- Reflect on what they have learned about their role in the civic life of their community by engaging with the project by explaining how the project influenced their civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets.

See [Appendix G: Sample High School Civics Project Rubric](#)

Service Learning

2b. Civic Experiences Area I - Complete a Service-Learning Project - 1 point

- Complete a minimum of 25 hours of demonstrated service to the community
- Write and submit a reflective essay/presentation
- Students may receive these points more than once

What is Service Learning?

Service learning is an inquiry-based, experiential learning approach that teaches curriculum-based objectives through meaningful service to the community. Service learning is more complex than community service – students engage in meaningful opportunities to apply what they learn to issues that matter to them. In addition, service learning involves investigation, preparation, action, and reflection. High-quality service learning goes beyond a requirement of minimum hours of service in a course. Students are required to use academic skills and knowledge to understand community needs to complete a service-learning project that serves the greater good of the community and to reflect upon their role as members of their community.

Service-learning projects are typically organized into five stages:

1. Investigation - conduct research on a community-based problem or needs
2. Preparation - create a plan to address these needs
3. Conduct Action
 - a. Direct service - Service involves hands-on, face-to-face interactions
 - b. Indirect service - Action is not seen by the people who may directly benefit from the service; however, the action meets a real need.
 - c. Advocacy - Students educate others about a particular issue with the goal of inspiring action to address the issue
4. Reflection - required to earn the point for the NYSED Civics Diploma Seal
5. Demonstration/celebration - can be combined with the presentation of the project and reflection

How does service-learning support civic readiness?

Service learning provides students with the opportunity to make positive contributions to their communities. Service learning can “spark the civic imagination of students of all ages as they begin the lifelong habits of engaged learning and active citizenship. Given opportunities to use the knowledge and skills they learn in school to address meaningful issues in the community, students gain an understanding of the importance and benefits of civic participation and how to effectively engage in our democracy.”³

³ Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools, page 32, <https://www.carnegie.org/publications/guardian-of-democracy-the-civic-mission-of-schools/>

Effective service-learning programs share the following eight traits:

1. Have sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.
2. Are used intentionally as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.
3. Incorporate multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society.
4. Actively engage participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.
5. Promote understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.
6. Are collaborative, and mutually beneficial and address community needs.
7. Engage participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals and use results for improvement and sustainability.
8. Provide youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experiences with guidance from adults.

National Youth Leadership Council, "K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice," (2008)

How to plan for a Service-Learning Project?

When planning for a Service-Learning Project, use the following guidance:

- The most meaningful service-learning projects are personally relevant to students and their interests. Surveying students to determine their interests is an important early step when introducing service learning to students. The format, length, and focus of the service-learning experiences should be age-appropriate and meaningful to the students.
- Service-learning projects are most effective when connected to the curriculum and high-quality projects are integrated into the curriculum. Service-learning projects can be organized in many academic disciplines.
- In both middle and high school settings, teachers will lead students through the five stages of service learning. For example, in grade 8, an interdisciplinary team of teachers could organize a service-learning experience in which students cleaned and decorated bus shelters in their town to spread messages of cultural appreciation. Students applied their knowledge by creating posters, which were installed as bus shelter panels. Cleaning and decorating bus shelters also sparked conversations about being more respectful of public property.
- With time, students with more experience with service-learning may be able to complete the stages of service-learning independently or with a small group of students with the facilitation/mentorship of an adult.
- Investigation into a community issue can be completed independently or within an academic course.
- Educators that organize service-learning projects will need to be familiar with School/District policies and regulations on fundraising, field trips and if applicable volunteers/community partnerships.
- Community partners are essential to provide placements for students to complete direct service-learning. Teachers/administrators will need to develop relationships with community partners to facilitate these placements. Service-learning projects are most

often completed with nonprofit tax-exempt organizations. Learning about the work of a community partner and its financial status, sources of funding, etc., should be included as part of the investigation component of a service-learning project. Some schools organize community fairs and invite community partners to attend to help students learn about the scope of their work.

- Reflection on service-learning should occur prior, during and after the completion of the service-learning project.

Reflective essay/presentation:

To earn points toward the NYSED Civics Diploma Seal for completing a service-learning project, students are required to submit a reflective essay/presentation that describes the impact of their service-learning.

Reflection opportunities must be incorporated before, during, and after the service-learning experience. Reflection activities completed prior to the service-learning experience can focus on helping students anticipate what their service-learning experience will be like and what assumptions they are bringing into the situation. Reflection that occurs during and after the service-learning experience helps students understand the actual outcome of their experience in relation to their academic experiences. Reflection questions can help students understand themselves, the population they are serving, the social issue driving their service activity, and the relationship between the service and their civics knowledge, skills, and mindset.

- The reflective essay/presentation assignment and evaluation criteria will be locally developed.
- Schools are strongly encouraged to ask students to self-assess their service-learning experience and reflections.
- Sample questions are provided⁴ to assist committees in developing the assignment and evaluation tools.

Issue-focused questions:

- Why is there a need for your service?
- What do you perceive as the underlying issue, and why does it exist?
- What social, economic, political, and educational systems are maintaining and perpetuating the situation?
- What can you do with the knowledge you gained from this experience to promote change?

Client-focused reflection questions:

- What similarities do you perceive between you and the people you are serving?
- How are you perceived by the people you are serving?
- What do you think a typical day is like for the people you serve? What pressures do they confront?

⁴ From Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, Indiana University at Bloomington, Reflection in Service Learning, accessed March 8, 2021, <https://citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources/teaching-strategies/reflection-service-learning/index.html>

Self-focused reflection questions:

- What personal qualities (e.g., leadership, communication skills, empathy etc.) have you developed through service-learning?
- What contribution can you make to public understanding of this issue based on your service-learning experience?
- In what ways are you finding your involvement with service-learning difficult? What have you found that is helping you follow through despite these difficulties?

What makes a Successful Service-Learning Project (2a)?

Evaluation Criteria:

Evaluation criteria for the reflective essay/presentation will be locally developed as they will reflect how the service-learning project was organized. The evaluation of a student's reflective essay/presentation should include an evaluation of selected students' Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills and Actions, Civic Mindset and Experiences listed in the Civic Readiness Domains.

See [Appendix H: Sample Service-Learning Evaluation](#)

See [Appendix I: Sample Service-Learning Rubric](#)

See [Appendix J: Service-Learning Resources](#)

Elective Course work

2c. Civic Experiences II - Demonstrate proficiency in an elective course that promotes civic engagement - .50 points

These courses will be locally determined and may exist within disciplines other than social studies. Acceptable courses will be determined by the district's Seal of Civic Readiness Committee. Examples include but are not limited to public speaking, literature of the civil rights movement, leadership skills, news literacy, and separate courses that are designed to support students as they pursue the Seal of Civic Readiness (Civics in Action, Contemporary Issues in America, Public Policy, Capstone Civics, etc.). To receive credit towards the Seal of Civics Readiness, students must complete and submit a Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflection. For elective courses, Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflections will be evaluated by a process established by the local Seal of Civic Readiness Committee (SCRC) in accordance with the guidance below. Students may receive these points more than once.

See [Appendix K: Application of Knowledge Component](#)

Extra-curricular or Worked-Based Learning Experience

2d. Civic Experiences III - Extra-curricular program, or work-based learning experience that promotes civic engagement or civic action - .5 points

- Must be a minimum of 40 hours.
- Write an application of knowledge essay/presentation.
- This may be accomplished over four years of high school.
- Students may receive these points more than once.

This component was designed to be flexible to recognize how clubs and responsibilities outside of school can shape a student’s civic engagement. This includes working after school, participating in Mock Trial, Model UN, or taking a leadership position in any extra-curricular organization. These programs will be determined at the local district level and are not limited to social studies related activities.

Definition of Work-based learning (according to: [NYSED CTE WBL Manual](#))

Work-based learning is authentic learning experiences that allow students to explore their career goals, abilities, and interests while applying their academic and technical knowledge and skills in a real-world context. These experiences are planned and supervised by instructional staff in collaboration with business, industry, or community partners. High quality work-based learning will provide effective and equitable experiences to empower all students to become confident workers and culturally competent citizens of New York State.

Please note: The Work-Based Learning experiences incorporated into BOCES CTE programming may count as the Seal of Civic Readiness Work-Based Learning experiences. This is a local school district decision. *It will be the responsibility of the local school to create and assess the Application of Knowledge component of this category.*

See [Appendix L: Work-Based Learning Definitions and Examples](#)

See [Appendix M: Sample Extracurricular Activities](#)

Middle School Capstone Project

2e. Middle School Capstone Project – 1 pt.

The Middle School Capstone Project is designed to give students a meaningful and foundational civic experience before they enter high school. The project should be completed under the direction of a teacher with requirements that reflect the elements listed below.

- Identify an issue (local, state, national or global)
- Apply civic knowledge, skills, actions, and mindsets to the issue
- Reflect on their learning
- Present the project to a wider audience

A Middle School Capstone committee of at least three educators, including at least one social studies teacher, should be formed at the middle school level. This committee will collaborate with teachers to develop Middle School Capstone project(s) ideas and evaluation criteria. The committee will review projects to determine if students meet the criteria set by the school to receive the one point of credit toward the Seal of Civic Readiness. At the middle school level, students are not required to present to the entire Middle School Civic Readiness Committee. However, students should present their completed projects to their advisor/teacher and a group of classmates.

The Middle School Capstone can also include a service option which will allow students to volunteer within their school or community. Civic action or service can be very beneficial but

requires significant parental and/or school support. At the middle school level, service is not required as part of the Middle School Capstone Project.

In developing guidelines for a Middle School Capstone Project, schools may want to develop a process that includes the following elements:

1. Under the direction of a teacher, students identify an issue or problem in their school, community, the nation, or the world as their area of focus. While some schools may decide to assign topics, the most meaningful projects are personally relevant to students and their interests. For example, projects might include hunger or food scarcity/insecurity, cancer, homelessness, endangered animals, preservation of hunting land, climate change, animal cruelty, access to youth athletics, juvenile diabetes, human rights, drug and alcohol abuse, issues surrounding family farms, etc.
2. Students develop a guiding question for their inquiry and then research the issue or problem they identified using multiple primary and secondary sources under the guidance of their advisor/teacher. Relevant research should be analyzed, with sources cited. While not required, students may want to contact organizations or individuals who are helping with their chosen issue for more information or an online interview. Letter writing can be included as an element in the project. Please note that any student contact with organizations or individuals outside of the school should follow procedures and protocols that have been developed by the school.
3. After the completion of their research, students develop either a service action plan or a detailed action plan.

Option A

Service Action Plan: Students develop an action plan that focuses on how individuals can make a difference with the chosen problem or issue. After developing the plan, students should complete service hours as determined by the school.

Option B

Detailed Action Plan: Students develop a detailed action plan that includes:

- Analyze research and data to determine the impact of the issue on the community.
 - Evaluate several possible solutions to address the problem.
 - Recommend one strategy and develop a detailed plan to implement that strategy.
4. Students should reflect on what they have learned about their role in civic life and the community.
 5. Students will present their middle school capstone project to their teacher/advisor and a group of students determined by the school

See [Appendix O: Middle School Capstone Project Essential Elements](#)

High School Capstone Project

2f. High School Capstone Project – 4 pts.

What is a Capstone Project? What does a Capstone Project assess?

A Capstone Project is a culminating assignment typically completed by students at the end of their final year of study in high school or college. Capstone Projects may be based in any academic subject area. Students typically create a portfolio, a final product, presentation, or performance. High quality Capstone Projects are generally designed to encourage students to:

1. Think critically
2. Solve challenging problems
3. Take action(s)
4. Practice skills related to the academic discipline and interdisciplinary skills such as oral communication, research skills, media literacy, teamwork, and planning

What is a New York Civic Readiness Capstone Project?

In New York, the Civic Readiness Capstone Project is a culminating, experiential, summative project assessing a student’s Civic Knowledge, Skills and Actions, and Civic Mindset that will be:

- Social Studies Standards-based
- Locally developed
- Authentic, hands-on, and include real-world investigation and application⁵

In addition to students’ preparation through the Pre-K-12 Social Studies program, students have gained knowledge and applied skills in other disciplines that will help them complete the Civic Readiness Capstone Project. For example, students’ skills and competencies that enable communication, spoken and written, in increasingly diverse ways and with increasingly diverse audiences have been developed through their P-12 English/Reading course work. Students’ research skills have been developed in English, Science and Social Studies coursework. Students have experience with asking questions and defining problems, developing, and carrying out investigations, analyzing and interpreting data from their math and science coursework. Capstone Projects required for graduation (i.e., Colorado) are typically aligned with postsecondary and workforce readiness requirements.

Finally, Capstone Projects allow for schools to create authentic interdisciplinary learning experiences for students that while rooted in Social Studies, have deep ties and explicit connections to the expectations and learnings laid out in the [NYSED CR-SE Framework](#) and the [NYSED SEL Benchmarks](#).

In a Civic Readiness Capstone Project, students will:

- Work independently or in groups
- Identify a civic issue (problem) facing them, their school, or their community

⁵ From “A Discussion of the Pathways to a New York State Diploma,” Presentation to NY Board of Regents, December 2018

- Analyze a civic issue (problem), evaluate alternative solutions, design and/or execute a solution for this problem
- Take informed action to address the civic issue
- Reflect on what they have learned about their school or community from the Capstone project
- Make a presentation about their Civic Readiness Capstone project to the School Civic Readiness Committee

When would students complete a Civic Readiness Capstone Project?

- Since the Civic Readiness Capstone Project is a component of the Seal of Civic Readiness, we recommend students complete a Civic Readiness Capstone Project in 11th or 12th grade. Students may begin working on the Capstone Project in an earlier grade if appropriate support and mentoring is available to them.
- Students can complete a Capstone Project within a course curriculum or as an independent study/project.
- Below are excerpts from the New York’s Grades 9-12 Social Studies Civics Practices which outline a partial framework for the development of a Civics Capstone Course.

New York State Social Studies Practices, Grades 9-12

F. Civic Participation:

2. Participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, community, state, or national issue or problem.
5. Participate in persuading, debating, negotiating, and compromising in the resolution of conflicts and differences.
6. Identify situations in which social actions are required and determine an appropriate course of action.
7. Work to influence those in positions of power to strive for extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights.
8. Fulfill social and political responsibilities associated with citizenship in a democratic society and interdependent global community by developing awareness of and/or engaging in the political process.

The [Grade 12 Participation and Civics Curriculum Framework](#) also includes content that could form the basis for the student experiences in a Civics Capstone course:

- **12.G3 Rights, Responsibilities, and Duties of Citizenship:** Active, engaged, and informed citizens are critical to the success of the United States representative democracy. United States citizens have certain rights, responsibilities, and duties, the fulfillment of which help to maintain the healthy functioning of the national, state, and local communities.
- **12.G4 Political and Civic Participation:** There are numerous avenues for engagement in the political process, from exercising the power of the vote, to affiliating with political

parties, to engaging in other forms of civic participation. Citizens leverage both electoral and non-electoral means to participate in the political process

- 12.G4e Citizens participate in civic life through volunteerism and advocacy, including efforts such as contacting elected officials, signing/organizing petitions, protesting, canvassing, and participating in/organizing boycotts.
- **12.G5 Public Policy:** All levels of government—local, state, and federal—are involved in shaping public policy and responding to public policy issues, all of which influence our lives beyond what appears in the Constitution. Engaged citizens understand how to find, monitor, evaluate, and respond to information on public policy issues.

*Please note that whether students work on the Capstone individually or in groups, individual students will need to meet the locally developed requirements for the Capstone Project that are aligned with the Essential Elements if using the Capstone to earn the Diploma Seal of Civic Readiness.

How does completing a Civic Readiness Capstone Project demonstrate students' readiness for civic engagement?

The Civic Readiness Capstone Project will provide students with an opportunity to apply and demonstrate Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills and Actions, and use a Civic Mindset to participate in activities that focus on a school or local community issue. The Essential Elements of the Capstone project (see [Appendix P](#)) requires students to examine their community, identify issue(s), conduct research into the contemporary and historical context of the issue, conduct analysis, develop strategies and solutions, take informed action, and reflect on their learning through the Capstone.

What do schools/Districts need to do to implement the Civic Readiness Capstone Project?

- Step 1: Convene the school's Seal of Civic Readiness Committee
 - Appoint a committee to design and evaluate the Capstone Project
 - Consider including community representatives on the Committee
- Step 2: Develop a structure for the Capstone
 - Develop a timeline for the completion of the Capstone
 - Develop the course structure within which the capstone project will live (i.e., Independent Study, a 12th grade course meeting the requirement for Participation in Government, a (Civics) Capstone Course, etc.)
- Step 3: Draft High School Civics Capstone Plan and Materials
 - Draft materials, student and teacher facing for the Capstone project
 - Develop evaluation tools (i.e., rubrics) to evaluate student progress during the work on the Capstone (i.e., formative assessment) and a summative evaluation of the Capstone
 - Share the materials with the school's Seal of Civic Readiness Committee for feedback
- Step 4: Create a plan for appropriate professional learning for teachers supporting the capstone work
 - Should teachers attend training?
 - What training might be appropriate for teachers to attend?

- Step 5: Develop relationships with community organizations (as necessary)
 - Create MOUs or other partnership agreements as necessary

What are the ideal circumstances for implementation of a Civic Readiness Capstone Project?

- Ideally, the Civics Capstone Project is completed in a course that is **dedicated solely or partially to this project** - i.e., a semester or trimester course dedicated to the Civics Capstone Project
- Ideally, students are matched with faculty advisors or mentors to help them present the Civics Capstone Project to the Civic Readiness Committee at a midpoint evaluation for feedback
- Ideally, students present their civics capstone project to the School’ s Civics Readiness Committee at the end of the course
- Students partner with community organizations or community leaders to take action

What are some examples of informed actions taken by high school students in civic engagement projects?

Teachers and students will work together to determine appropriate actions that can be taken by students. Examples include:

- Organizing students to meet with the school principal to present petitions about changing school rules
- Meeting with local legislators to lobby for a change in local laws
- Organizing and participating in a debate
- Writing editorials or creating social media campaigns to raise awareness about a local issue such as a transportation desert
- Organizing a campaign to raise awareness of mental health support systems that might be available at a school or school district
- Starting a sustainable community garden for a school or community.

In addition to participating in action, students should also reflect on what they have learned about their civic identity from their action and analyze the consequences (the benefits and costs) of the course(s) of action taken.

How will schools evaluate Civic Readiness Capstone Projects?

Schools should develop evaluation tools, including scoring rubrics, based on the Essential Elements of the Civics Capstone Project. Students will need both formative and summative feedback on their Civics Capstone Projects. Schools will need to develop project timelines with associated benchmarks to ensure a timely completion of the Civics Capstone Project if it is being used as a requirement for the Seal of Civic Readiness.

Can students compile a portfolio for their Civic Readiness Capstone Project?

Yes, students can organize a portfolio to collect the elements of their Civics Capstone Project. A portfolio would include artifacts from the Essential Elements and different stages of the project and a summative reflection on the Civics Capstone Project experience, reflecting on the process that was implemented, challenges that were faced, project limitations, successes, future civic

actions, and transferable skills. The reflection will also address the student’s sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local and/or national problems.

Social Studies teachers will benefit from professional development on principles of portfolio design to help students select appropriate artifacts for their portfolio. Schools/districts will need to develop guidelines and criteria for student portfolios if they are evaluated as the summative assessment for the Civics Capstone Project.

Can students complete a research paper for their Civic Readiness Capstone Project?

No. A research paper would not contain the Essential Elements of a Civics Capstone Project. Students can complete a [Research paper on a civic engagement-related issue](#) and use that for 1 point toward the Seal of Civic Readiness Criteria for Civic Knowledge.

See [Appendix P: High School Capstone Project Essential Elements](#)

See [Appendix Q: Sample of a Student High School Civic Capstone Project](#)

How Schools and Districts Can Offer the Seal of Civic Readiness

Public schools, charter schools, and registered nonpublic schools that wish to offer the Seal must complete the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway application through the [NYSED Business Portal](#) and receive approval from NYSED. Applicants will describe the following: goals, communication plan, student tracking system, projected enrollment, connection to [NYSED Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Initiative](#), advisement, and evaluation plans. For more information about the application process see [Appendix A: Seal of Civic Readiness Application Instructions](#).

At the conclusion of every school year, schools that were accepted to offer the Seal of Civic Readiness will be required to report the number of Seal recipients, the names and titles of their Seal of Civic Readiness Committee members, and any changes to the school’s program through the [NYSED Business Portal](#).

How BOCES, P-Tech Programs, Regional High Schools, and Other Educational Entities Can Offer a Seal Program

BOCES and other educational entities that enroll students from one or more districts, and which do not confer high school diplomas for some (out of district) or all enrolled students, that would like to offer coursework and learning experiences that would provide students with the opportunity to attain the Seal, must complete the Seal of Civic Readiness application through the [NYSED Business Portal](#) and receive approval from NYSED.

Applicants must describe the following: goals, communication plan, student tracking system, projected enrollment, connection to [NYSED Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Initiative](#), advisement, and evaluation plans. Please see [Appendix B: Seal of Civic Readiness Application for Educational Entities](#).

In addition, entities wishing to offer a Seal of Civic Readiness Program which would provide the coursework and educational experiences that would allow students to complete the requirements to obtain the Seal of Civic Readiness must do the following:

1. Provide a description and documentation of the proposed Seal Program to all Superintendents of districts that enroll students in the program;
2. Provide a copy of [Appendix C: Application for Districts to Grant the Seal of Civic Readiness to Students who Complete the Seal Program outside of the District](#) to all districts that enroll students in the program; and
3. Collect signed applications from all districts to submit with the application, per the instructions found in [Appendix B](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

The Seal of Civic Readiness and How to Apply

Q1: What is the New York State Seal of Civic Readiness (NYSSCR)?

A: The Seal of Civic Readiness is a formal recognition that a student has attained a high level of proficiency in civic knowledge, civic skills, civic mindset, and civic experiences. The Seal of Civic Readiness distinction on a high school transcript and diploma

- Indicates the student’s understanding of and commitment to participatory government, civic responsibility, and civic values;
- Provides universities and colleges with a method to recognize and provide credit for attainment of higher level of understanding and skills in Social Studies;
- Demonstrates to universities, colleges, and future employers that students have earned recognition for their civic knowledge, skills, mindset, and experiences; and
- Recognizes the value of civic engagement and scholarship to school communities and society at large.

Q2: What are the benefits for implementing the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness in School Districts?

A: High quality, school-based civic learning fosters civic knowledge, skills, attitudes or dispositions, and promotes civic equality and engagement. It connects scholarship to real-world learning experiences that promote active civic participation in communities. In addition, progression through the skills and competencies of the Seal include:

- ***Fostering Civic Knowledge, Skills, Mindsets:*** When students engage in school-based civic learning and civic action projects they broaden and deepen their civic knowledge and understanding, and their civic mindsets are nurtured and refined.
- ***Promotes Civic Equity:*** Universally available, high-quality civic learning opportunities can help by elevating historically marginalized voices and communities.
- ***Builds 21st Century Skills:*** Students develop and hone presentation, media-literacy, collaborative, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.
- ***Improves School Climate and Community Involvement:*** Real world learning experiences further connects students to their schools and neighborhood communities. Through civic action projects, young people learn how to navigate the world outside of

the classroom, learn respectful dialogue, collaboration and teamwork, and develop an appreciation for diversity.

Q3: Is the Seal of Civic Readiness part of the College, Career, and Civic Readiness (CCR) Index for ESSA?

A: The CCR Index calculates the percentage of students in the accountability cohort who demonstrate readiness as measured by diplomas, credentials, advanced course credits and enrollment, technical education certifications, HSE diplomas and other similar indicators. The index is on a scale of 200 and each student in the cohort can earn a maximum of two points towards the index. For example, if a school has 100 students and all earn two points, the school's index score would be 200. You can find the weight assigned to the different indicators of readiness on the [State Accountability Resource Tool \(StART\) Educator Guide here](#). Graduating with a Seal of Civic Readiness has a weight of two. Students who demonstrate readiness through multiple indicators get credit for the one with the highest weight.

Q4: What are the requirements for students interested in receiving the NYSSCR?

A: Students who wish to receive the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness shall complete all requirements for a New York State local or Regents diploma.

Q5: Who awards the NYSSCR to the students?

A: The NYSSCR is an award given by a school that has been approved by NYSED to grant the Seal. The school formally recognizes students who have demonstrated proficiencies in civic knowledge and participation by high school graduation.

Q6: Can the Seal of Civic Readiness be granted to students who are earning a local diploma?

A: Yes, the Seal of Civic Readiness is open to all students who earn a NYS diploma.

Q7: What are the criteria for attaining the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness?

A: The criteria require students to meet both academic and participation criteria. There is a level of choice for students that is reflective of the diversity of their experiences and backgrounds as well as the diversity of New York State school systems. Students must demonstrate proficiencies in civic knowledge and civic participation as measured in the Seal of Civic Readiness criteria.

Q8: Is there a cost to students for the Seal?

A: No. A fee may not be charged to students who participate in the NYSSCR program.

Q9: Who provides the physical Seal and any graduation regalia to the students?

A: It is the school's or district's decision whether to provide physical printed seals. The Department does not provide physical seals, but an electronic image of the seal will be made available by the Department.

Q10: To get more information on and/or to ask questions about the New York State Seal of Civic Readiness, which office do I contact?

A: Contact the Office of Standards and Instruction at emscurric@nysed.gov.

Q11: Where is the application located?

A: The application to offer the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway is now available for all districts and schools in the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System located within the [Application Business Portal](#).

Q12: Is there a role for community members or organizations?

A: Yes. Civic readiness and engagement involves students interacting in meaningful ways with the local community, government representatives, civic organizations, etc. The role of civic groups and organizations is extremely important to the process. There are several entry points for districts to involve community members or organizations. Districts may choose to include a community member on its NYSSCR committee, as a member of the evaluation committee for the student’s civic project, or as student mentors.

Q13: In districts with multiple high schools, can a single high school create its own program?

A: Yes. In large school districts with multiple high schools, a single high school may form a SCR committee and create an independent NYSSCR program within the district.

Q14: What information do schools need to submit to NYSED if they plan to award the Diploma Seal?

A: Schools need to complete the Seal of Civic Readiness Application on [NYSED’s business portal](#). This application will include contact information and detailed narratives describing how the district will provide opportunities for students to earn the Seal of Civic Readiness.

Q15: Is there a timeline for NYSSCR program activities?

A: The school-based SCR Committee will be responsible for creating a timeline for all activities pertaining to the NYSSCR program. This will include outreach, a student advisement schedule, and dates for important benchmarks throughout the year.

Student and Community Outreach

Q16: When should a student be educated about NYSSCR?

A: Guidance counselors and teachers may begin speaking to students as early as possible so that they may begin planning their course of study and potential projects. While this is designed as a culminating high school project, students may begin developing ideas or becoming engaged in a civics-related course of action much earlier. Possible entry points for planning and involvement may begin in the early high school years, middle school, and even elementary school. Students can earn points toward the NYSSCR by completing a Middle School Capstone Project. However, students are not at a disadvantage if they begin the Capstone project in high school.

Q17: Can students begin working towards a NYSSCR before high school?

A: Yes. Students can earn points toward the NYSSCR by completing a Middle School Capstone Project. Schools/Districts are advised to create a Middle School Seal of Civic Readiness subcommittee to collaborate with Social Studies teachers to develop the Middle School Capstone project(s).

Q18: How should the District’s Seal of Civic Readiness Committee promote the Seal?

A: The District’s committee must decide on methods for communicating the NYSSCR program to its students, parents, faculty, and community, which may include informational meetings, parent letters, newsletters, school website, workshops, assemblies, and coverage in the local media. Information presented would contain background information on the NYSSCR, NYSSCR contact information, the student application process, the advisement process, and proficiency criteria.

Advisement

Q19: Should students be set up with an advisor after they apply?

A: Once the committee has received the application, it is recommend but not required that students be assigned an advisor who will remain with the student through the completion of the program requirements. Ideally, the advisor will review the requirements with the students and meet with him/her on a regular basis.

Components of the Seal of Civic Readiness application packet will include:

- NYS Seal of Civic Readiness Student Application, which may include a self-assessment
- NYS Seal of Civic Readiness student, mentor, and school counselor checklists

Q20: If a student scores Mastery on a Regents Exam, do they get points for proficiency and mastery?

A: No. Students will earn either 1.0 or 1.5 depending on their score on exams. A student will earn 1 point for scores between 65-84 and 1.5 point for each score between 85-100. Students who are eligible for 55-64 safety nets and 45 variances will also earn 1 credit per exam.

Q21: Can students who are participating in remote learning earn the Seal?

A: Yes. The participation requirements may be completed in remote learning environments.

Q22: When can students start earning points for the Seal of Civic Readiness?

A: The Middle School Capstone Project may begin in Grade 7 or 8. All other points may be earned in Grades 8-12.

Q23: Once a school or district is approved to grant students the Seal of Civic Readiness, may students count work they did before their school was approved?

A: Yes. Students may retroactively count any work they did from Grades 7-12 as outlined above. This will be a local district decision.

Appendix A: Seal of Civic Readiness Application Instructions

Seal of Civic Readiness Application Information and Guidance

Overview

This document is intended to provide guidance for schools and districts on the creation and submission of the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway Application.

Regulations

[8 CRR-NY 100.5\(i\), New York State Seal of Civic Readiness](#)

[8 CRR-NY 100.5\(d\)\(13\), Civics Pathway](#)

School District participation in The Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway is voluntary. Schools who wish to offer this pathway shall:

- (i) submit an application for approval to the Commissioner, in a form and by a date prescribed by the commissioner, for the school District to participate in the program. Such application shall include a narrative that describes how the District will implement the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness program, including plans for program communications, processes pertaining to student tracking, advisement and evaluation, and timeliness and benchmarks for the program;
- (ii) maintain appropriate records in order to identify students who have earned a NYS Seal of Civic Readiness. At the end of each school year in which a school District participates in the program, the school District shall submit a report to the commissioner, in a form and by a date prescribed by the commissioner, that includes the number of students receiving the Seal along with relevant data including, but not limited to the criteria chosen under subparagraph (4)(ii) and (iii) of this subdivision; and
- (iii) establish and identify a NYS Seal of Civic Readiness Committee (SCRC).
 - (a) The SCRC shall include, but is not limited to, the following personnel:
 - (1) at least one Social Studies teacher;
 - (2) at least one School Counselor or other staff who will track student progress on earning the Seal; and
 - (3) at least one administrator or other staff member who will serve as the main contact with the Department to collect data on school offerings and submit copies of student work to the Department if requested.
 - (b) The SCRC shall:
 - (1) create a NYS Seal of Civic Readiness plan that includes, but is not limited to, details concerning communications, student advisement, evaluation, and presentation of awards;
 - (2) create a master list of all available courses and extra-curricular activities pertaining to the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness program within their high school including, but not limited to dates for required benchmarks throughout the program year;
 - (3) develop a student tracking process, including an application process to be completed by interested students and reviewed by an advisor;

- (4) review and approve potential service learning, extracurricular and work-based learning experiences, the Middle School Capstone Project if available, Civic Projects and Civics Capstone Projects in accordance with Commissioner’s guidelines; and
- (5) review and evaluate all coursework, assessments, and civic experiential learning completed by each student to ensure criteria for the seal are met.

The method by which NYSED collects information on The Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway is an application through the [SED Monitoring and Vendor Reporting System](#).

NYSED Goals

The intent of the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness is to encourage the study of civics and civility through experiential learning; certify attainment of civic readiness; provide employers with a method of identifying high school graduates with skills in civics and civility; provide universities with an additional method to recognize applicants seeking admission; prepare students with twenty-first century skills; recognize the value of K-12 Social Studies education in schools as a means to build civic knowledge; empower students as agents of positive social change to redress historical and contemporary oppression; and strengthen our diverse democracy. The NYS Seal of Civic Readiness shall be awarded to students who meet the criteria of this subdivision and complete all criteria prescribed by the Commissioner at a New York State high school approved by the Commissioner to offer the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness.

Submission Process

School District superintendents, or their designees, will submit essential information about the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway through an application issued through the [SED Monitoring and Vendor Reporting System](#).

Districts must complete all sections and enter answers directly into the application. NYSED will review plans and may communicate with the applicants if answers are not complete or thorough. The applicant may be required to communicate with NYSED for clarification or to provide additional information. Once any concerns are addressed and properly corrected, plans will be approved.

Access to the Survey

To access the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System:

- ✓ Go to the [NYSED Business Portal](#);
- ✓ Click on the “Log In” button;
- ✓ Enter your username and password;
- ✓ Click on “SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System” under My Applications;
- ✓ Select “NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway Application”
- ✓ Click on ‘view’ to begin/continue to input information.

The superintendent will have automatic access to the plan. The superintendent will need to delegate access to the person or persons completing the plan through SEDDAS, the SED Delegated Account System, which manages access to SED web-based applications through the Application Business Portal. Granting these permissions will NOT provide access to any other information in the portal. The superintendent is the only individual that has submit/certify rights and will therefore need to submit the plan when it is ready to be reviewed. For questions regarding the entitlement process, please see the [SEDDAS mini guide](#) for entitling users to SED Monitoring.

Timeline

This one-year application will enable a District to offer the Seal of Civic Readiness for the upcoming school year.

The deadline to submit the application to NYSED to guarantee that the application will be reviewed in time for Spring graduation is August 1st of the current school year. NYSED will continue to review applications received after August 1st on a rolling basis. Applicants will be notified of their application status, also on a rolling basis.

Structure of the Guidance

The following pages outline the specific information that districts will be required to enter in the SED Monitoring system survey. Guidance is provided in italics below each question. The questions below provide a framework for planning and provide relevant information to support the development of a Seal of Civic Readiness +1 pathway program. Responses should be thorough. A more comprehensive plan is a best practice that will serve Districts well for planning and implementation with stakeholders.

Section I – Questions 1-7

1. Last name/First name

NYSED will consider this person to be the point of contact for questions about the application

2. High School BEDS Code

Write in your school's BEDS Code. Additional information about BEDS codes can be found on the [NYSED website](#)

3. School name

Write in the full official name of the High School

4. Type of school.

A drop-down menu will appear. Please select one of the following categories: Public, Private, Charter, Other

5. Official job title of applicant completing this form

Write in your official title

6. School District name

Write in the full title of your LEA/Charter School

7. Projected number of students who will earn the Seal by June

Estimated number of students who will be in a position to earn all 6 points on the Seal by June

8. Is this a public school within the New York City Department of Education?

If yes, please do NOT complete this form and instead contact the NYCDOE Civics for All at civicsforall@schools.nyc.gov.

NYCDOE will oversee all NYCDOE public schools. If you are a NYCDOE public school interested in offering the Seal of Civic Readiness please contact civicsforall@schools.nyc.gov to receive the appropriate application.

Section II – Questions 9-16

9. Provide a detailed description of the goals for the school’s program.

Your narrative may include information about:

- ✓ *Improving participation in experiential learning*
- ✓ *Expanding access for all students to acquire and use the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and experiences to attain civic readiness*
- ✓ *Promoting a relationship of trust, cultural responsiveness, and respect between schools and families*

10. Provide a detailed narrative that describes how the school will implement the Seal of Civic Readiness program, including timeliness and benchmarks for program.

Your narrative may include information about:

- ✓ *Building the capacity of educators and administrators*
- ✓ *Building culturally responsive instruction and learning environments to support high expectations and rigorous instruction including student led civic engagement that empower students as positive agents of social change*
- ✓ *Professional development related to the Civic Readiness Initiative*
- ✓ *Resource allocations in place to support the Civic Readiness Initiative*
- ✓ *Approaches to accommodate diverse learning styles and language proficiencies*

11. Provide a detailed description of the school’s communication plan that has been developed to aid in the implementation the Seal of Civic Readiness.

Your narrative may include information about:

- ✓ *Communication plan that targets students, staff, community, and other stakeholder groups*

- ✓ *Goals and objectives for the Civic Readiness Initiative are clearly defined, actionable and serve as the foundation for communication and engagement efforts*
- ✓ *A well-maintained social media presence utilizing the #NYSCIVICSSEAL*
- ✓ *A plan to build awareness and to strengthen civics education that align with the [Definition of Civic Readiness](#).*
- ✓ *A plan to sustain and grow parent and community stakeholder engagement*

12. Provide a detailed description of the school’s student tracking process that has been developed to aid in the implementation the Seal of Civic Readiness.

Your narrative may include information about:

- ✓ *Development and maintenance of a school wide data system that will enable all applicable points counted towards the Seal for each student.*
- ✓ *The school level Seal of Civic Readiness Committee should determine if retroactive points will be allowable and how that information will be collected if applicable.*
- ✓ *Determine whether to build or buy a data management system*
- ✓ *Clearly articulate system requirements relative to user needs*
- ✓ *Evaluate the accessibility and consistency of the student tracking process*
- ✓ *Plan and stage the implementation of the data system.*

13. Provide a detailed description of the school’s advisement and evaluation plans, policies, and procedures that have been developed to aid in the implementation the Seal of Civic Readiness.

Your narrative may include information about:

- ✓ *Collection of formal and informal feedback to measure success to improve communications and engagement activities*
- ✓ *Processes in place to adjust the program based on data analysis*
- ✓ *Plan for awarding points is rigorous and consistent*
- ✓ *Processes to measure and evaluate District Civic Readiness goals and action steps to attain goals.*
- ✓ *A responsive services component on behalf of student with disabilities, English Language Learners, or students experiencing homelessness and/or housing insecurity to ensure their ability to earn a Seal of Civic Readiness*

14. Provide a detailed narrative that describes how the school’s program connects to [NYSED’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Initiative](#).

Your narrative may include information about:

- ✓ *Preparing all students to become actively engaged citizens*
- ✓ *Respecting diversity to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs for all*
- ✓ *Creating an environment where all feel safe, supported, and valued*

15. Please read the regulations:

- a. [8 CRR-NY 100.5\(i\), New York State Seal of Civic Readiness](#)
- b. [8 CRR-NY 100.5\(d\)\(13\), Civics Pathway](#)

16. Please go to the [Office of Standards and Instruction's Civic Readiness Initiative website](http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/civic-readiness-initiative) and review the following materials:

(<http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/civic-readiness-initiative>):

- The Seal of Civic Readiness
- The Definition of Civic Readiness
- The Civic Capstone Project

Appendix B: Seal of Civic Readiness Application for Educational Entities that Enroll Students from Multiple Districts and Do Not Confer Diplomas for All

Information and Guidance

Overview

This document is intended to provide guidance for educational entities that enroll students from one or more districts, and which do not confer high school diplomas for some (out of district) or all enrolled students, on the creation and submission of the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway Program Application. This includes but may not be limited to BOCES programs, regional secondary schools, and alternative, special education, early college, and P-Tech programs/schools that enroll students from multiple districts.

Entities wishing to offer a Seal of Civic Readiness Program which would provide the coursework and educational experiences that would allow students to complete the requirements to obtain the Seal of Civic Readiness must do the following:

1. Complete the application as described in this document;
2. Provide a description and documentation of the program to all Superintendents of districts that enroll students in the program;
3. Provide a copy of Appendix C: Application for Districts to Grant the Seal of Civic Readiness to Students who Complete the Seal Program outside of the District to all districts that enroll students in the program; and
4. Collect signed applications from all districts to submit with this application, per the instructions found in this document.

District participation is voluntary; however, please be aware that if a student completes the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Pathway requirements within your program, and if the district does NOT sign the District Application (Appendix C), the district may not award the student the Seal of Civic Readiness.

The District Application (Appendix C) only applies to students participating in the Seal of Civic Readiness Pathway program offered by your entity. If the district wishes to offer the Seal to district students through the district's high schools, they should see [Appendix A](#) for instructions on how to apply.

Regulations

[8 CRR-NY 100.5\(i\), New York State Seal of Civic Readiness](#)

[8 CRR-NY 100.5\(d\)\(13\), Civics Pathway](#)

School District participation in The Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway is voluntary. Schools who wish to offer this pathway shall:

- (i) submit an application for approval to the Commissioner, in a form and by a date prescribed by the commissioner, for the school District to participate in the program. Such application shall include a narrative that describes how the District will implement

- the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness program, including plans for program communications, processes pertaining to student tracking, advisement and evaluation, and timeliness and benchmarks for the program;
- (ii) maintain appropriate records in order to identify students who have earned a NYS Seal of Civic Readiness. At the end of each school year in which a school District participates in the program, the school District shall submit a report to the commissioner, in a form and by a date prescribed by the commissioner, that includes the number of students receiving the Seal along with relevant data including, but not limited to the criteria chosen under subparagraph (4)(ii) and (iii) of this subdivision; and
 - (iii) establish and identify a NYS Seal of Civic Readiness Committee (SCRC).
 - (a) The SCRC shall include, but is not limited to, the following personnel:
 - (1) at least one Social Studies teacher;
 - (2) at least one School Counselor or other staff who will track student progress on earning the Seal; and
 - (3) at least one administrator or other staff member who will serve as the main contact with the Department to collect data on school offerings and submit copies of student work to the Department if requested.
 - (b) The SCRC shall:
 - (1) create a NYS Seal of Civic Readiness plan that includes, but is not limited to, details concerning communications, student advisement, evaluation, and presentation of awards;
 - (2) create a master list of all available courses and extra-curricular activities pertaining to the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness program within their high school including, but not limited to dates for required benchmarks throughout the program year;
 - (3) develop a student tracking process, including an application process to be completed by interested students and reviewed by an advisor;
 - (4) review and approve potential service learning, extracurricular and work-based learning experiences, the Middle School Capstone Project if available, Civic Projects and Civics Capstone Projects in accordance with Commissioner's guidelines; and
 - (5) review and evaluate all coursework, assessments, and civic experiential learning completed by each student to ensure criteria for the seal are met.

The method by which NYSED collects information on The Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway is an application through the [SED Monitoring and Vendor Reporting System](#).

NYSED Goals

The intent of the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness is to encourage the study of civics and civility through experiential learning; certify attainment of civic readiness; provide employers with a method of identifying high school graduates with skills in civics and civility; provide universities with an additional method to recognize applicants seeking admission; prepare students with twenty-first century skills; recognize the value of K-12 Social Studies education in schools as a means to build civic knowledge; empower students as agents of positive social change to redress historical and contemporary oppression and strengthen our diverse democracy. The NYS Seal of Civic Readiness shall be awarded to students who meet the criteria of this subdivision and

complete all criteria prescribed by the Commissioner at a New York State high school approved by the commissioner to offer the NYS Seal of Civic Readiness.

Submission Process

District Superintendents or their designees, or CEOs shall submit essential information about the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Civics Pathway through an application issued through the [SED Monitoring and Vendor Reporting System](#).

Schools/programs must complete all sections and enter answers directly into the application.

NYSED will review plans and may communicate with the applicants if answers are not complete or thorough. The applicant may be required to communicate with NYSED for clarification or additional information. Once any concerns are addressed and properly corrected plans will be approved.

Access to the Survey

To access the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System:

- ✓ Go to the [NYSED Business Portal](#);
- ✓ Click on the “Log In” button;
- ✓ Enter your username and password;
- ✓ Click on “SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System”
- ✓ Click on “Office of Curriculum”
- ✓ Select “Seal of Civic Readiness Application for BOCES, P-Tech, Regional Secondary, Early College, Alternative and Special Education High School Programs”
- ✓ Click on ‘view’ to begin/continue to input information.

The point of contact from the school/program will have automatic access to the plan. They will need to delegate access to the person or persons completing the plan through SEDDAS, the SED Delegated Account System, which manages access to SED web-based applications through the Application Business Portal. Granting these permissions will NOT provide access to any other information in the portal. They are the only individual that has submit/certify rights and will therefore need to submit the plan when it is ready to be reviewed. For questions regarding the entitlement process, please see the [SEDDAS mini guide](#) for entitling users to SED Monitoring.

Timeline

This one-year application will enable a School/Program to offer the Seal of Civic Readiness for the **current** school year.

Applicants will be notified of their application status on a rolling basis.

Structure of the Guidance

The following pages outline the specific information that schools/program will be required to enter in the SED Monitoring system survey. Guidance is provided in italics below each question. The questions below provide a framework for planning and provide relevant information to

support the development of a Seal of Civic Readiness +1 pathway program. Responses should be thorough. A more comprehensive plan is a best practice that will serve schools/program well for planning and implementation with stakeholders.

Section I – Questions 1-4

1. Last name/First name
NYSED will consider this person to be the point of contact for questions about the application
2. Type of school/program.
A drop-down menu will appear. Please select one of the following categories: BOCES, P-Tech, Early College, Regional Secondary, Special Education, Other
3. Official job title of applicant completing this form
Write in your official title
4. Projected number of students who will earn the Seal by June
Estimated number of students who will be able to earn all 6 points on the Seal by June

Section II – Questions 5-13

5. Provide a detailed description of the goals for the school/program.
Your narrative may include information about:
 - *Improving participation in experiential learning*
 - *Expanding access for all students to acquire and use the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and experiences to attain civic readiness*
 - *Promoting a relationship of trust, cultural responsiveness, and respect between school/program and families*
6. Provide a detailed narrative that describes how the school/program will implement the Seal of Civic Readiness program, including timeliness and benchmarks for program.
Your narrative may include information about:
 - *Building the capacity of educators and administrators*
 - *Building culturally responsive instruction and learning environments to support high expectations and rigorous instruction including student led civic engagement that empower students as positive agents of social change*
 - *Professional development related to the Civic Readiness Initiative*
 - *Resource allocations in place to support the Civic Readiness Initiative*
 - *Approaches to accommodate diverse learning styles and language proficiencies*
7. Provide a detailed description of the school/program communication plan that has been developed to aid in the implementation the Seal of Civic Readiness.
Your narrative may include information about:
 - *Communication plan that targets students, staff, community, and other stakeholder groups*

- *Goals and objectives for the Civic Readiness Initiative are clearly defined, actionable and serve as the foundation for communication and engagement efforts*
 - *A well-maintained social media presence utilizing the #NYSCIVICSSEAL*
 - *A plan to build awareness and to strengthen civics education that align with the [Definition of Civic Readiness](#).*
 - *A plan to sustain and grow parent and community stakeholder engagement*
8. Provide a detailed description of the school/program student tracking process that has been developed to aid in the implementation the Seal of Civic Readiness.
Your narrative may include information about:
- *Development and maintenance of a data system that will enable all applicable points counted towards the Seal for each student.*
 - *The local Seal of Civic Readiness Committee should determine if retroactive points will be allowable and how that information will be collected if applicable*
 - *Determine whether to build or buy a data management system*
 - *Clearly articulate system requirements relative to user needs*
 - *Evaluate the accessibility and consistency of the student tracking process*
 - *Plan and stage the implementation of the data system.*
9. Provide a detailed description of the school/program advisement and evaluation plans, policies, and procedures that have been developed to aid in the implementation the Seal of Civic Readiness.
Your narrative may include information about:
- *Collection of formal and informal feedback to measure success to improve communications and engagement activities*
 - *Processes in place to adjust the program based on data analysis*
 - *Plan for awarding points is rigorous and consistent*
 - *Processes to measure and evaluate District Civic Readiness goals and action steps to attain goals.*
 - *A responsive services component on behalf of student with disabilities, English Language Learners, students experiencing homelessness and/or housing insecurity to ensure their ability to earn a Seal of Civic Readiness*
10. Provide a detailed narrative that describes how the school/program connects to [NYSED's Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Initiative](#).
Your narrative may include information about:
- *Preparing all students to become actively engaged citizens*
 - *Respecting diversity to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs for all*
 - *Creating an environment where all feel safe, supported, and valued*
11. Please read the regulations:
- a. [8 CRR-NY 100.5\(i\), New York State Seal of Civic Readiness](#)
 - b. [8 CRR-NY 100.5\(d\)\(13\), Civics Pathway](#)

12. Please go to the [Office of Standards and Instruction's Civic Readiness Initiative website](http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/civic-readiness-initiative) (<http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/civic-readiness-initiative>) and review the following materials:
- The Seal of Civic Readiness
 - The Definition of Civic Readiness
 - The Civic Capstone Project
13. Attach a completed District Application Form (Appendix C) for every participating district. It is the responsibility of the entity applying to offer the Seal Program to collect this completed application from all participating districts and upload the completed forms in their NYSED application.

Appendix C: Application for Districts to Grant the Seal of Civic Readiness to Students who Complete the Seal Program outside of the District

This is a one year application for districts seeking authorization to grant the Seal of Civic Readiness to their own district students who

- attend a program outside of the district with an educational entity that does not confer high school diplomas (BOCES programs, regional secondary schools, and alternative, special education, early college, and P-Tech programs/schools that enroll students from multiple districts), and
- complete the requirements for the Seal of Civic Readiness Program while attending the outside program or school, as determined by the outside program.

This application only applies to students participating in a Seal of Civic Readiness Program in the entity listed below (#4). If the district wishes to offer the Seal to district students through the district’s high schools, please see [Appendix A](#) for instructions on how to apply.

District participation is voluntary; however, please be aware that if a student completes the Seal of Civic Readiness +1 Pathway requirements outside of the district, and if the district does NOT sign this application, the district may not award the student the Seal of Civic Readiness.

The Seal of Civic Readiness is an approved +1 Pathway to meet New York State diploma requirements. However, if a student has already passed five Regents Exams or has chosen a separate 4+1 Pathway, they may still earn the Seal of Civic Readiness as a stand-alone distinction on a NYS High School Diploma.

Once completed and signed, this application should be sent to the entity listed below (#4), which is responsible for collecting and submitting to NYSED as part of its application to offer a Seal of Civic Readiness Program all applications from districts of students participating in the entity’s program.

1. Name of District:
2. BEDS CODE:
3. Name of Superintendent:
4. Name of entity providing the Seal of Civic Readiness Program to district student(s):
5. As Superintendent, my signature below affirms the following:
 - I have reviewed and approve of the Seal of Civic Readiness Program being provided to my district student(s) at the educational entity listed above (#4), and this application is based on the responses provided by the above entity;
 - Upon confirmation from the above entity that the student(s) have successfully met the requirements for the Seal of Civic Readiness, the Seal will be granted upon the student’s graduation; and
 - I understand that the entity offering the Seal Program must apply separately and be approved by the New York State Education Department in order to offer the Seal Program, and that until approval is granted, my district may not grant the Seal to any student participating in the program at the above entity.

Signature of Superintendent

Date: _____

Appendix D: Seal of Civic Readiness Optional Reflection Guide



Civic Readiness Optional Reflection Guide

Introduction

Civic Ready students use civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets to make decisions and take actions for themselves, their communities, and the public good as members of a culturally diverse, democratic society. Schools, therefore, should provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop specific civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets—and to participate in authentic actions and experiences—that are necessary for them to function as productive civic participants within their schools, communities, states, our country, and the world.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) is committed to empowering the civic agency of students and ensuring all students achieve civic readiness as a result of their prekindergarten – 12th grade education. The Board of Regents and NYSED have also emphasized this position in their Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan. NYSED understands that the results we seek for all our children can only be fully achieved by incorporating an equity and inclusion lens in every facet of our work.

Civic education strengthens the relationships between schools and students, as well as students' relationships with parents, caregivers and families, civic leaders, community partners, and among each other. The responsibility of ensuring all students are civic ready is a chief aim of social studies education.

Additionally, a growing body of research finds that all students benefit when their schools implement strong Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies and practices – including academic, cognitive, civic, social-emotional, and economic benefits. Effective school DEI policies empower students from all backgrounds to visualize successful futures for themselves and provide them with a sense of belonging and self-worth. These benefits can lead to improved student achievement, which in turn can lead to better outcomes in other areas of their lives, including work and civic engagement.

The Definition of Civic Readiness is organized around four domains:

1. Civic Knowledge
2. Civic Skills and Actions
3. Civic Mindsets
4. Civic Experiences

This Reflection Document is provided as an optional guide to help schools and districts as they plan to offer the Seal of Civic Readiness.

Directions for Part 1:

Completing the Reflection

The school’s Civic Readiness coordinator and/or the school’s Seal of Civic Readiness Committee could review the indicators and consider which of the three categories best captures the work the school has completed to date and/or needed areas of focus.

Emerging: Demonstrates beginning knowledge and skills with limited use of the defined practice.

Integrating: Exhibits an understanding and use of knowledge and skills in the practice, and performance is growing.

Sustaining: Sustains an exemplary level of practice.

Post- Reflection

School teams could use the reflection to identify priorities to pursue throughout the school year.

Part 1

Civic Knowledge- demonstrate a fundamental and functional knowledge of government, law, history, geography, culture, economics, and current events. These may include inequities within our democratic system at the federal, state, and local level. Students should know how to apply this knowledge to different circumstances and settings.

PRACTICES	E	I	S	How this looks in our school
Structure and functioning of government, law, and democracy at the federal, state, local and school levels and how to participate				
Civil and educational rights and responsibilities guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, the Constitution of the State of NY, and federal, state, and local statutes and regulations				
History, geography, economics, and current events within our country and in our global society				
Impact of individual and collective histories in shaping contemporary issues				
View and analyze history and current issues from multiple perspectives				
The importance of civic rights and responsibilities, such as voting, volunteering,				
Ensuring a free press				

Civic Skills and Actions- Demonstrate a broad array of critical analytic, verbal, communication, media literacy and other skills and participate in a wide variety of actions. Students should practice such actions both inside and outside of school on a regular basis.

PRACTICES	E	I	S	How this looks in our school
Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates and how to respectfully disagree with other viewpoints and provide evidence for a counterargument				
Participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, community, state, or national issue or problem				
Identify, describe, and contrast the roles of the individual in opportunities for social and political participation in different societies				
Work to influence those in positions of power to achieve extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights				
Fulfill social and political responsibilities associated with participation in a democratic society and the interdependent global community by developing awareness of and/or engaging in the political process				
Analyze and evaluate news (news literacy) media, social media, and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility				
Engagement in working toward the public good				

Civic Mindsets- Demonstrate the mindset of a participant in a democratic society. A civic mindset is a commitment to democratic interpersonal and intrapersonal values, virtues, attitudes, and beliefs and informed actions that promote and facilitate meaningful participation in civic life. It is an understanding of self as part of and responsible to larger social groups.

PRACTICES	E	I	S	How this looks in our school
Valuing equity, inclusivity, diversity, and fairness				
Recognizing the need to plan for both current needs and the good of future generations				
Committing to balancing the common good with individual liberties				
Demonstrating a sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local and/or national problems				
Respecting fundamental democratic principles, such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the rule of law				

Civic Experiences- participate in developmentally appropriate civic experiences. Civic readiness should be developed in a variety of settings and ways—inside and outside the classroom, across content areas and for multiple purposes. Civic Readiness should be promoted by engaging students in relevant experiences that include students as active participants.

PRACTICES	E	I	S	How this looks in our school
Completing a civic capstone or civic engagement project				
Engaging in service learning				
Engaging in civil discourse around controversial issues				
Engaging with news and digital tools, such as social media, responsibly				
Participating in civic centered co-curricular and extracurricular activities such as Model UN, Student Government, Debate Club, Student Journalism, or Mock Trial				
Participating in school governance				
Voting, volunteering, and participating in community organizations and governmental systems, such as community boards, youth advisory councils etc. to promote continuous improvement				
Engaging with local officials and government institutions through activities such as providing public comment before a government agency, or meeting with public and elected officials.				

Directions for Part 2:

Answers to this section could be based on feedback received at the end of the year from teachers and students, in addition to the committee.

Part 2

The Seal of Civic Readiness Successes and Challenges		
Categories of Feedback	Successes	Challenges
Point Structure of the Seal		
Accessibility for all students including ELL and Students with Disabilities		
Barriers to offering the Seal to all students		
Building a K-8 Civics program to support the Seal		
Building Partnerships with outside organizations		

Appendix E: Students Scenarios Earning the Seal of Civic Readiness

The following scenarios show examples of how a student might earn the Diploma Seal of Civic Readiness. These scenarios are not inclusive of all the possibilities that exist for students to achieve the Seal, but serve as examples for schools, districts, and administration to better understand the options available to students. Please note, the highlighted portion of the below Sample Student Record Sheet shows examples of when and how the student(s) obtained the points.

Sample Student Record Sheet

Name:

Counselor:

Date:

Students who receive the NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness must earn a total of six points, with at least two points from column #1 (Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge) and at least two points from column #2 (Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation).									
Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge					Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation				
	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1a. Four (4) Social Studies courses required for graduation**	1				2a. Civic Skills, Actions, and Mindsets Complete a high school civic project	1.5*			
1b. Social Studies Regents Exams Mastery level (85+) Exam Scores: Global History & Geography Regents United States History Regents _____	1.5*				2b. Civic Experiences Area I Complete a service-learning project	1*			
1c. Social Studies Regents Exams Proficiency Level (65+)*** Exam Scores: Global History & Geography Regents United States History Regents _____	1*				2c. Civic Experiences Area II Demonstrate proficiency in an elective course that promotes civic engagement Course(s):	.50*			

	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1d. Advanced Social Studies Courses List courses here:	.50*				2d. Civic Experiences Area III Participate in an extra-curricular program, or work-based learning experience	.50*			
1e. Research Project	1				2e. Middle School Capstone Project Year Completed:	1			
					2f. High School Capstone Project Year Completed:	4			
Points Earned:					Points Earned:				

Total Points Earned: _____

Notes:

*Students may receive these points more than once.

**or the equivalent of these courses, as approved by the local public-school superintendent or his or her designee or by the chief administrative officer of a registered nonpublic high school

***apply safety net if eligible

Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided for all State and districtwide assessments administered to students with disabilities, as consistent with State policy. Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.

**Please note, while reviewing the Sample Student Record sheets below, the highlighted areas are either what the student did to earn the point, obtaining the point(s), the date the student obtained the point(s), and if the Seal of Civic Readiness Committee approved the student earning the point(s).

**New York State Diploma Seal of Civic Readiness
Sample Student Record Sheet**

Name: *Student 1 – Earns Diploma Seal*

Students who receive the NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness must earn a total of six points, with at least two points from column #1 (Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge) and at least two points from column #2 (Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation).									
Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge					Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation				
	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1a. Four (4) Social Studies courses required for graduation**	1	1	6/22	Yes 6/22	2a. Civic Skills, Actions, and Mindsets Complete a high school civic project	1.5*			
1b. Social Studies Regents Exams Mastery level (85+) Exam Scores: Global History & Geography Regents United States History Regents ____	1.5*				2b. Civic Experiences Area I Complete a service-learning project <i>Completed through PIG class 9/21-1/22. "Adopt a grandparent at local nursing home"; presented to PIG class 1/22.</i>	1*	1	1/22	Yes Presented 1/22
1c. Social Studies Regents Exams Proficiency Level (65+)*** Exam Scores: Global History & Geography Regents: 72 United States History Regents: 79 ____	1*	2	6/19 6/20 EX	Yes 5/1/22	2c. Civic Experiences Area II Demonstrate proficiency in an elective course that promotes civic engagement Course(s):	.50*			

	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1d. Advanced Social Studies Courses List courses here:	.50*				2d. Civic Experiences Area III Participate in an extra-curricular program, or work-based learning experience <i>Member, Key Club grades 9-12</i>	.50*	2	6/22	Yes Presented 6/22
1e. Research Project	1				2e. Middle School Capstone Project Year Completed:	1			
					2f. High School Capstone Project Year Completed:	4			
Points Earned:		3	6/22	Yes 6/22	Points Earned:		3	6/22	Yes 6/22

Total Points Earned: 6

Notes:

*Students may receive these points more than once.

**or the equivalent of these courses, as approved by the local public-school superintendent or his or her designee or by the chief administrative officer of a registered nonpublic high school

***apply safety net if eligible

Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided for all State and districtwide assessments administered to students with disabilities, as consistent with State policy.

Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.

**New York State Diploma Seal of Civic Readiness
Sample Student Record Sheet**

Name: *Student 2 – Earns Diploma Seal*

Students who receive the NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness must earn a total of six points, with at least two points from column #1 (Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge) and at least two points from column #2 (Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation).									
Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge					Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation				
	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1a. Four (4) Social Studies courses required for graduation**	1	1	6/22	Yes 6/22	2a. Civic Skills, Actions, and Mindsets Complete a high school civic project	1.5*			
1b. Social Studies Regents Exams Mastery level (85+) Exam Scores: Global History & Geography Regents United States History Regents ____	1.5*				2b. Civic Experiences Area I Complete a service-learning project <i>Service learning completed through Key Club, 9/21-5/22. Presented at Senior Banquet.</i>	1*	1	5/22	Yes Presented 5/22
1c. Social Studies Regents Exams Proficiency Level (65+)*** Exam Scores: Global History & Geography Regents: 45 *** United States History Regents: 65 __	1*	2	6/19 6/20 EX	Yes 5/22	2c. Civic Experiences Area II Demonstrate proficiency in an elective course that promotes civic engagement Course(s):	.50*			

	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1d. Advanced Social Studies Courses List courses here:	.50*				2d. Civic Experiences Area III Participate in an extra-curricular program, or work-based learning experience <i>Member, Best Buddies grades 9-11, President, Grade 12.</i>	.50*	1	6/22	Yes Presented 6/22
1e. Research Project <i>Research Project on voter participation completed in English 12.</i>	1	1	1/21	Yes 1/21	2e. Middle School Capstone Project Year Completed:	1			
					2f. High School Capstone Project Year Completed:	4			
Points Earned:		4	6/22	Yes 6/22	Points Earned:		3	6/22	Yes 6/22

Total Points Earned: 7

Notes:

*Students may receive these points more than once.

**or the equivalent of these courses, as approved by the local public-school superintendent or his or her designee or by the chief administrative officer of a registered nonpublic high school

***apply safety net if eligible

Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided for all State and districtwide assessments administered to students with disabilities, as consistent with State policy.

Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria⁴.

**New York State Diploma Seal of Civic Readiness
Sample Student Record Sheet**

Name: *Student 3 – Earns Diploma Seal*

Students who receive the NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness must earn a total of six points, with at least two points from column #1 (Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge) and at least two points from column #2 (Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation).

Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge					Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation				
	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1a. Four (4) Social Studies courses required for graduation* *	1	1	6/22	Yes 6/22	2a. Civic Skills, Actions, and Mindsets Complete a high school civic project	1.5* <i>Organized and participated in virtual food drive with local community organization with soccer team.</i>	1.5	12/21	Yes 6/22 Presented 12/21
						<i>Participated in civic project led by Key Club raising awareness and funds for the local Wall of Heroes</i>	1.5	5/22	Yes 6/22 Presented 5/22
1b. Social Studies Regents Exams Mastery level (85+) Exam Scores: <i>AP World History: Modern exam: 5</i> <i>AP US History exam: 5</i>	1.5*	3	6/19 6/20	Yes 5/22	2b. Civic Experiences Area I Complete a service-learning project	1*			

	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1c. Social Studies Regents Exams Proficiency Level (65+)** Exam Scores:	1*				2c. Civic Experiences Area II Demonstrate proficiency in an elective course that promotes civic engagement Course(s):	.50*			
1d. Advanced Social Studies Courses List courses here:	.50*				2d. Civic Experiences Area III Participate in an extra-curricular program, or work-based learning experience <i>Member, Mock Trial Team, Grades 11-12</i>	.50*	1	6/22	Yes Presented 6/22
1e. Research Project	1				2e. Middle School Capstone Project Year Completed:	1			
					2f. High School Capstone Project Year Completed:	4			
Points Earned:		4	6/22	Yes 6/22	Points Earned:		4	6/22	Yes 6/22

Total Points Earned: 8

Notes:

*Students may receive these points more than once.

**or the equivalent of these courses, as approved by the local public-school superintendent or his or her designee or by the chief administrative officer of a registered nonpublic high school

***apply safety net if eligible

Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided for all State and districtwide assessments administered to students with disabilities, as consistent with State policy.

Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.

**New York State Diploma Seal of Civic Readiness
Sample Student Record Sheet**

Name: *Student 4 – Does Not Earn Diploma Seal*

Students who receive the NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness must earn a total of six points, with at least two points from column #1 (Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge) and at least two points from column #2 (Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation).									
Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in Civic Knowledge					Criteria for Demonstrating Civic Participation				
	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1a. Four (4) Social Studies courses required for graduation**	1	1	6/22	Yes 6/22	2a. Civic Skills, Actions, and Mindsets Complete a high school civic project	1.5*			
1b. Social Studies Regents Exams Mastery level (85+) Exam Scores:	1.5*				2b. Civic Experiences Area I Complete a service-learning project	1*			
1c. Social Studies Regents Exams Proficiency Level (65+)*** Exam Scores: <i>Global History & Geography Regents: 75 United States History Regents: EX</i>	1*	2	6/19 6/20 EX	Yes 5/1/22	2c. Civic Experiences Area II Demonstrate proficiency in an elective course that promotes civic engagement Course(s):	.50*			

	Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval		Points Possible	Points Earned	Date(s) Earned	SCRC Approval
1d. Advanced Social Studies Courses List courses here:	.50*				2d. Civic Experiences Area III Participate in an extra-curricular program, or work-based learning experience <i>Member, Key Club, Grades 9-12</i>	.50*	1	6/22	Yes Presented 6/22
1e. Research Project	1				2e. Middle School Capstone Project Year Completed:	1			
					2f. High School Capstone Project Year Completed:	4			
Points Earned:		3	6/22	Yes 6/22	Points Earned:		1	6/22	Yes 6/22

Total Points Earned: 4

Notes:

*Students may receive these points more than once.

**or the equivalent of these courses, as approved by the local public-school superintendent or his or her designee or by the chief administrative officer of a registered nonpublic high school

***apply safety net if eligible

Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided for all State and districtwide assessments administered to students with disabilities, as consistent with State policy. Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.

Appendix F: Sample Rubric for the Research Project

The Civics Knowledge Research Paper rubric below reflects the basic criteria for assessing student learning in the project. You will need to modify it so that it reflects the specific research task provided to your students, including adding additional sections where needed. Research projects will be approved and evaluated by a process established by the local Seal of Civic Readiness Committee (SCRC). Research projects should earn holistic scores of Proficient or Advanced to receive credit towards the Seal of Civic Readiness. Students may revise and improve their research papers to meet the criteria for proficient and/or advanced.

Research Project Rubric	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
Presentation of Topic Under Investigation	<p>Research topic is aligned with the domain of civic knowledge.</p> <p>Author presents a compelling thesis that states the argument, question, or topic under examination. Thesis answers the prompt (as provided or developed by the student). The thesis/question/topic is a consistent focal point throughout the paper.</p>	<p>Research topic is aligned with the domain of civic knowledge.</p> <p>Presents a persuasive thesis that states the argument, question, or topic under examination. Thesis answers the prompt.</p>	<p>Research topic is aligned with the domain of civic knowledge.</p> <p>Presents a clear thesis that states the argument, question, or topic under examination. Thesis is related to the prompt.</p>	<p>Research topic is not aligned with the domain of civic knowledge.</p> <p>Presents a thesis that does not answer the prompt.</p>
Argumentation <i>(Where Applicable)</i>	<p>Constructs a plausible and compelling argument by integrating relevant evidence from sources.</p> <p>Introduces accurate, credible, and precise claims, distinguishing the claims from alternate or opposing claims.</p> <p>Identifies the strengths and limitations of both claims and counter-claims, refuting the counterargument.</p>	<p>Constructs a plausible and persuasive argument using relevant evidence from sources.</p> <p>Introduces credible and accurate claims of an event or issue, acknowledging and distinguishing the claims from at least one counterclaim.</p>	<p>Presents a plausible claim or argument using relevant evidence from sources.</p> <p>Introduces credible claims about a topic. May include minor inaccuracies.</p>	<p>Student makes an implausible claim or argument using irrelevant and/or disconnected evidence from sources.</p> <p>Introduces claims about a topic or issue with inaccuracies.</p>

Research Project Rubric	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
<p>Gathering, Using, Interpreting Sources</p>	<p>Integrates relevant, compelling, credible, and varied evidence to analyze historical, current, and civic issues in support of the topic or argument.</p> <p>Cites complete and accurate source information for each piece of evidence.</p>	<p>Integrates useful, credible, and varied evidence to analyze historical, current, and civic issues in support of the topic or argument.</p> <p>Cites accurate source information for each piece of evidence.</p>	<p>Uses some useful and credible evidence to analyze historical, current, and civic issues in support of the topic or argument; some sources may not be relevant or may refute even refute the argument.</p> <p>Source information is cited for some evidence. Minor inaccuracies may exist.</p>	<p>Evidence selected is not useful or credible and does not support the topic or argument.</p> <p>Limited evidence is cited. Major inaccuracies exist.</p>
<p>Historical Background</p>	<p>Demonstrates thorough understanding of the issue/topic by providing many rich, varied, and relevant facts, examples, and details. Examples provide historically accurate context and background.</p>	<p>Demonstrates comprehension of the issue/topic by providing many historically accurate and relevant facts, examples, and details.</p>	<p>Demonstrates fair comprehension of the issue/topic using relevant facts, examples, and details. May include some minor inaccuracies, misunderstandings, or misapplications.</p>	<p>Demonstrates poor comprehension of the issue/topic with few historically accurate or relevant facts, examples, or details.</p> <p>Includes inaccuracies, misunderstandings, or misapplications.</p>
<p>Organization, Cohesion & Conventions</p>	<p>Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization that supports the student’s topic or argument; includes an introduction and a conclusion that support the argument presented.</p> <p>Maintains a fluent, cohesive style and appropriate tone in attendance to the domains of civic knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Relationships in the text are strengthened and clarified using accurate words, phrases, and varied syntax. Little to no grammatical errors are present.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization that supports the student’s topic or argument; includes an introduction and a conclusion that support the argument presented.</p> <p>Maintains fluency, cohesion, and appropriate tone in attendance to the domains of civic knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Relationships in the text are clarified using accurate words and phrases. Few grammatical errors are present.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a general plan of organization; may lack focus; it may not be clear which aspect of the research project is being addressed. May lack an introduction and/or conclusion.</p> <p>Fluency, cohesion, and appropriate tone is uneven. Attendance to the domains of civic knowledge and skills, is uneven or unbalanced.</p> <p>Relationships in the text/aspects of the task are unclear at times. Use of accurate words and phrases is uneven.</p> <p>Grammatical errors are present.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a weakness in organization; lacks focus; aspects may be omitted or are disconnected from the topic or argument; lacks an introduction and/or a conclusion.</p> <p>Lacks fluency, cohesion, and appropriate tone to the task.</p> <p>Relationships in the text/aspects of the task are unclear or omitted. Use of accurate words and phrases is uneven or inappropriate for the issue under investigation.</p> <p>Grammatical errors are present.</p>

Appendix G: Sample Rubric for the High School Civics Project

The 2a Civic Project rubric below reflects the basic criteria for assessing student learning in the project. You will need to modify it so that it reflects the specific task investigated by students, including adding additional sections where needed. Civic projects should earn holistic scores of proficient or advanced to receive credit towards the Seal of Civic Readiness. Students may revise and improve their Civic Projects to meet the criteria for proficient and/or advanced.

Civics Project Rubric	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
<p>Identification and Definition of the Issue Under Investigation</p> <p><i>Focus on a civic issue or problem within a policy area that may be predetermined by the teacher or advisor. The Civic Project is focused on a civic issue or problem that can be interpreted in a variety of ways by a broad array of citizens holding various viewpoints.</i></p>	<p>Civic issue/problem under investigation is identified clearly and effectively explained in depth.</p> <p>Presents a precise and knowledgeable central claim (thesis) that convincingly answers the question or issue under investigation.</p>	<p>Civic issue/problem under investigation identified and described clearly. Understanding by the reader is not seriously impeded by omissions.</p> <p>Presents a knowledgeable central claim (thesis) that answers the question or issue under investigation.</p>	<p>Civic issue/problem under investigation identified but description may be ambiguous. The boundaries of the issue may be broad or unclear. Minor inaccuracies may be present.</p>	<p>Civic issue/problem under investigation is vaguely or partially identified without clarification or description. Thesis and position are unclear.</p>
<p>Analysis and Use of Sources</p> <p><i>Analyze data and primary, and secondary sources of evidence related to the civic issue under investigation and its impact on communities.</i></p> <p><i>Sources should be evaluated for bias and credibility.</i></p> <p><i>Sources can be provided by the teacher, advisor, or student.</i></p>	<p>Student constructs a strong, coherent claim or argument by integrating relevant, varied, credible, compelling evidence from sources.</p> <p>Integrates relevant and compelling evidence to analyze the historical background of the issue and its impact in our current society.</p> <p>Cites complete and accurate source information for each piece of evidence.</p>	<p>Student constructs a coherent claim or argument using relevant, varied, credible evidence from sources.</p> <p>Integrated useful and relevant evidence to analyze the historical background of the issue and its impact in our current society.</p> <p>Cites accurate source information for each piece of evidence.</p>	<p>Student presents a claim or argument using evidence from credible sources.</p> <p>Uses some relevant evidence to analyze the historical background of the issue and its impact in our current society. Some evidence may not be useful or relevant, may be uneven or may even refute the argument.</p> <p>Source information is cited for some evidence. Minor inaccuracies exist.</p>	<p>Student makes an implausible claim or argument using irrelevant and/or disconnected evidence from sources. Sources may lack credibility.</p> <p>Evidence selected is not useful and does not support the argument.</p> <p>Limited evidence is cited. Major inaccuracies exist.</p>

Civics Project Rubric	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
<p>Analysis and Evaluation of Current Policies</p> <p><i>Evaluate at least 2 current public policies related to the issue or problem under investigation. Policies may be local, state, national or international.</i></p>	<p>Policies under investigation are described and analyzed clearly and comprehensively.</p> <p>Thoroughly evaluates the impact, strengths, and limitations of current policies on communities.</p>	<p>Policies under investigation are described and analyzed clearly (may include more description versus analysis).</p> <p>Evaluates the impact, strengths, and limitations of current policies on communities.</p>	<p>Policies under investigation are identified and minimally described. May include minor inaccuracies.</p> <p>Attempts to evaluate the policy may be present, but may be unclear, vague, unbalanced, or one-sided.</p>	<p>Policies under investigation are identified with no description or are not identified. Information may be inaccurate.</p> <p>Evaluation of policies is missing or unclear.</p>
<p>Justification of Potential Alternatives, Strategies/ Courses of Action</p> <p><i>Recommend and evaluate potential strategies/courses of action to address the issue or problem that is under investigation.</i></p>	<p>Plan of action/alternatives to current policy, recommended strategies and arguments are presented, and described and justified thoroughly.</p> <p>Recommendations and arguments are clearly connected to the student's evaluation of current policies.</p>	<p>Plan of action/alternatives to current policy/ recommended strategies and arguments are presented and described and justified.</p> <p>Recommendations and arguments are connected to the student's evaluation of current policies.</p>	<p>Plan of action/alternatives to current policy/ recommended strategies and arguments are presented but may lack adequate description or justification.</p> <p>Recommendations and arguments may be somewhat disconnected to the student's evaluation of current policies.</p>	<p>Plan of action/alternatives to current policy/ recommended strategies and arguments may be omitted or are presented but lack description and coherence.</p> <p>Recommendations are disconnected from the student's evaluation or are inconsistent with the issue under investigation.</p>
<p>Reflection</p> <p><i>Explains how the project influenced their civic knowledge, skills, mindsets and, where appropriate, actions.</i></p>	<p>Includes a thorough self-reflection on how their project impacted their civic knowledge, skills, mindsets and, if appropriate, actions.</p> <p>Reflections are connected to the issue under investigation.</p>	<p>Includes a self-reflection on how their project influenced their civic knowledge, skills, mindsets and, if appropriate, actions.</p> <p>Reflections are connected to the issue under investigation, but may be somewhat uneven, favoring one aspect over another.</p>	<p>Includes a self-reflection on how their project influenced their civic knowledge, skills, mindsets and, if appropriate, actions.</p> <p>Reflections may be minimal, omit one or more of the domains or may be somewhat disconnected from the issue under investigation.</p>	<p>Project does not include a self-reflection.</p>

Civics Project Rubric	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
<p>Organization, Cohesion & Conventions</p> <p><i>Projects are organized and communicated in a manner that enhances the argument and the audience's understanding.</i></p>	<p>Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization that supports the student's argument; includes an introduction and a conclusion that support the argument presented.</p> <p>Maintains a fluent, cohesive style and appropriate tone in attendance to the domains of civic knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Relationships in the text are strengthened and clarified using accurate words, phrases, and varied syntax. Little to no grammatical errors are present.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization that supports the student's argument; includes an introduction and a conclusion that support the argument presented.</p> <p>Maintains fluency, cohesion, and appropriate tone in attendance to the domains of civic knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Relationships in the text are clarified using accurate words and phrases. Few grammatical errors are present.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a general plan of organization; may lack focus; it may not be clear which aspect of the project is being addressed. May lack an introduction and/or conclusion.</p> <p>Fluency, cohesion, and appropriate tone is uneven. Attendance to the domains of civic knowledge and skills, is uneven or unbalanced.</p> <p>Relationships in the text/aspects of the task are unclear at times.</p> <p>Use of accurate words and phrases is uneven. Grammatical errors are present.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a weakness in organization; lacks focus; aspects may be omitted or are disconnected from the issue under investigation; lacks an introduction and/or a conclusion.</p> <p>Lacks fluency, cohesion, and appropriate tone to the task.</p> <p>Relationships in the text/aspects of the task are unclear or omitted. Use of accurate words and phrases is uneven or inappropriate for the issue under investigation.</p> <p>Grammatical errors are present.</p>
<p>Presentation</p> <p><i>Communicate their project using written, audio/visual, and/or oral presentations.</i></p>	<p>Communicates civic project in an SCR committee-approved format. Format chosen enhances the communication of the project.</p>	<p>Communicates civic project in an SCR committee-approved format. Format chosen is appropriate for the communication of the project.</p>	<p>Communicates civic project in an SCR committee-approved format. Format chosen is for the communication of the project and vice versa.</p>	<p>Communicates civic project in a format that is not approved by the SCR committee.</p> <p>Project is not submitted or is unfinished. Format chosen degrades the quality and communication of the project.</p>

Adapted from: [Performance Level Descriptors, United State History and Government \(Framework\); NYS Next Generation Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Other Technical Subjects, 11-12](#)

Resources:

How to Write an Op-Ed or Column from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Accessed at: https://projects.ig.harvard.edu/files/hks-communications-program/files/new_seglin_how_to_write_an_oped_1_25_17_7.pdf

A Political Science Guide: What is a Policy Paper? (2017). Accessed at: <https://politicalscienceguide.com/home/policy-paper/>

Appendix H: Service-Learning Project Reflection Evaluation Example

Student Name:

Service-Learning Project:

Element		Meets Requirements?	Reviewer's Comments
Background information & Civic Knowledge	<p>Reflection includes a description of the service-learning experience, including the challenges faced by the student and the successes of the project.</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of the community problem and its connection to local/state/national government.</p> <p>The reflection essay/presentation/product includes artifacts (i.e., photographs, video recordings, newspaper articles) that document your service-learning experience.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Hours Requirement	<p>Completed 25 hours of service.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Civic Skills and Actions	<p>Demonstrates understanding of the opportunities for individual participation in society.</p> <p>Demonstrates engagement in working toward the public good.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Civic Mindset	<p>Demonstrates empathy, compassion, and respect for the views of people with other opinions and perspectives.</p> <p>Demonstrates the sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local problems.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Reviewer's Recommendation for Points earned: _____

Appendix I: Service-Learning Project Reflection - Evaluation Rubric

Student Name:

Service-Learning Project:

Element	Mastery	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
Civic Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the community problem and its connection to local/state/national government. • Community need and its relevance are clearly identified and focused upon throughout the project • Recognized need identified through research or a needs assessment (methods could include asset mapping, surveying, interviewing) • Reflection includes a description of the service- learning experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the community problem and its connection to local/state/national government. • Community need and its relevance are identified at the beginning of the project • Recognized need identified through research (methods could include asset mapping or surveying) • Reflection includes a description of the service- learning experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited understanding of the community problem • Need identified but its relevance to community is not explored in depth • Reflection includes a description of the service- learning experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need identified • Incomplete description of the service- learning experience
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection completed throughout the project addresses need, project impact, and personal and academic growth. Reflection addresses challenges faced and successes of the project • Reflection includes multiple artifacts (i.e., photographs, video recordings) that document the experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection completed periodically (i.e., pre and post) addresses need, impact • Reflection addresses challenges or successes • Reflection includes some artifacts (i.e., photographs, video recordings) that document the experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-project reflection completed • Reflection addresses challenges • Reflection includes one artifact that documents the experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reflection evident
Hours Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met NYSED requirement by completing 25 hours of service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met NYSED requirement by completing 25 hours of service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not meet NYSED requirements by completing less than 25 hours of service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not meet NYSED requirements by completing less than 25 hours of service

Element	Mastery	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
Civic Skills and Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the opportunities for individual participation in society • Demonstrates engagement in working toward the public good • Demonstrates exemplary communication and collaboration skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the opportunities for individual participation in society • Demonstrates engagement in working toward the public good • Demonstrates communication and collaboration skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes limited understanding of the opportunities for individual participation in society • Describes limited engagement in working toward the public good • Demonstrates limited communication and collaboration skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes limited understanding of the opportunities for individual participation in society • Describes limited engagement in working toward the public good • Demonstrates limited communication and collaboration skills
Civic Mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates empathy, compassion, and respect for the views of people with other opinions and perspectives • Demonstrates the sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates empathy, compassion, and respect for the views of people with other opinions and perspectives • Demonstrates the sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes empathy or compassion for the views of people with other opinions and perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes empathy or compassion for the views of people with other opinions and perspectives
Essay/Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently establishes and maintains a formal style and appropriate tone while attending to the norms and conventions of purpose, and audience for the essay/presentation • Consistently makes strategic use of digital media and/or visual displays in essay/presentation to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence, and to add elements of interest to engage the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes a formal style and appropriate tone while attending to the norms and conventions of purpose, and audience for the essay/presentation • Makes strategic use of digital media and/or visual displays in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence, and to add elements of interest to engage the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has difficulty establishing or maintaining a formal style and appropriate tone while attending to the norms and conventions of purpose, and audience for the essay/presentation • Digital media and/or visual displays are included in the essay/presentation but they may not enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal style and appropriate tone • Essay/presentation is not engaging to the audience • No digital media and/or visual displays are included

Appendix J: Service-Learning Resources

Resources to assist schools in developing service-learning projects:

National Youth Leadership Council:

- National Youth Leadership Council, *What is Service Learning?* available for free download at <https://www.nylc.org/page/GettingStarted>
- Service-Learning Standards: <https://www.nylc.org/page/standards>
- Additional resources require a paid membership

New York City Department of Education:

- Service Learning Resources: <https://infohub.nyced.org/in-our-schools/programs/experiential-learning/service-in-schools/service-learning-opportunities-and-resources>

Generation On:

- IPARDE Model - Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection, Demonstration and Evaluation
- <https://www.generationon.org/page/iparde-resources>
- [Checklist of Reflection Activities](#)
- <https://www.generationon.org/page/why-service-learning>

Illinois Civics Hub:

- Service-Learning Tool Kit: <https://www.illinoiscivics.org/curriculum-toolkit/service-learning/>
- <https://www.illinoiscivics.org/democracy-schools/elements-of-democracy-schools/learning-experiences/informed-action/>

Maryland State Department of Education:

- Service learning is a graduation requirement in Maryland. Information about Maryland's service-learning requirement, <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Service-Learning/par.aspx>

Guardian of Democracy Report:

- https://media.carnegie.org/filer_public/ab/dd/abdda62e-6e84-47a4-a043-348d2f2085ae/ccny_grantee_2011_guardian.pdf

Youth.gov - is the U.S. government website that helps create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs. Included are youth facts, funding information, and tools to help assess community assets, generate maps of local and federal resources, search for evidence-based youth programs, and keep up to date on the latest, youth-related news. Youth.gov was created by the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP), which is composed of representatives from 22 U.S. federal agencies that support programs and services focusing on youth. Service Learning is included as a form of civic engagement in this website.

- <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/civic-engagement-and-volunteering/service-learning>

American Psychological Association:

- Research on service-learning pedagogy (college level): <https://www.apa.org/education-career/undergrad/research>

Appendix K: Application of Knowledge

What makes a successful Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflection?

A Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflection asks students to show how the experience is aligned with the SCR Domains of Civic Readiness by explaining how the experience, elective course, or activity impacted their civic knowledge, skills, mindsets, and ability to take action.

- Students may submit final reflections in a variety of formats: a written essay, an extended-response survey, a podcast, a visual/slide-based presentation or a creative piece accompanied with a rationale. Where appropriate, reflections could also be completed whole class or in small groups in the form of a Socratic Seminar or other discussion-based protocol.
- Based on the course or experience, students' reflections may be weighted more towards one domain than another.
- It is recommended that teachers model and support students' reflection and metacognition throughout the course. Journaling, check-ins, community circles, and small-group discussions are all ways for students to continually examine their own growth and responses to different topics and issues. Ongoing reflection supports the completion of quality final reflections that are aligned to the domains of civic readiness.

Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflections: Teacher Feedback Form

Teachers & SCR Committee Members: Use the [feedback form](#), to structure your evaluation of students' application of knowledge reflections. Application of knowledge reflections are required for students submitting evidence for 2c. Elective Courses and 2d. Extracurriculars and Work-Based Learning. Reflections for 2a. Civic Projects, 2b. Service Learning, 2e. Middle School Capstone and 2f. High School Capstones are embedded within the projects and do not require a separate reflective task.

Reflection affords students the opportunity to align their civic experiences with personal learning in the four domains: knowledge, skills and actions, mindsets and lived experience. Optimally, students will share thinking from the beginning of their experience through its completion. Considerations should be made to introduce students to the indicators of success and the reflection opportunity as students begin their work. This will assist the students as they work towards specific civic goals inherent in a variety of tasks and opportunities and help teachers and students to have clarity about both the intended learning outcomes and application of knowledge areas and criteria.

Students' reflections may be in a variety of forms. Written tasks, podcasts, video, visual or oral presentations, or creative pieces accompanied with a rationale are all examples of acceptable application of knowledge products. The content of the reflection will be evaluated based upon the criteria below.

Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflections - Teacher Feedback Form

Developing Areas for Improvement	Criteria Standards for Mastery	Advanced Evidence of Exceeding Standards
	<p>Criteria #1: Describes Civic Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course/activity • Context/setting • Student role • Purpose of course/activity/experience <p>Notes:</p>	
	<p>Criteria #2: Explains Civic Knowledge Gained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure and functioning of government and how to be an active participant • Civil and educational rights and responsibilities (statutory) • History, geography, economics, and current events • The impact of various histories on shaping contemporary issues • How history and current issues can be analyzed from multiple perspectives • How the opportunities for social and political participation in different societies can be described, compared, and contrasted <p>Notes:</p>	
	<p>Criteria # 3: Describes How the Student’s Civic Skills and Actions Were Impacted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respected the rights of others • Participated in activities focused on a classroom, school, community, state or national issue or problem • Worked to influence those in positions of power to achieve extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights • Developed an awareness of/engaged in the political process • Analyzed and evaluated sources for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility • Engaged in working towards public good <p>Notes:</p>	
	<p>Criteria #4: Describes How the Student’s Civic Mindset Was Impacted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing equity, diversity and, and fairness • Recognition of the necessity of planning for both current and future needs • Empathizing and respecting the multiple views and perspectives • Committing to balancing the common good with individual liberties • Willingness to contribute to solving local/national problems through personal civic agency <p>Notes:</p>	

Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflections: Student Guide

NOTE: The guidance below is a broad starting point. You will need to modify it so that it reflects the work you've done for the elective course, extra-curricular or work-based experience.

What makes a successful Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflection?

A Civic Participation Application of Knowledge Reflection asks you to show how the experience you lead or participated in has impacted your civic knowledge, skills, mindsets, and ability to take action.

- You may submit final reflections in a variety of formats: a written essay, an extended-response survey, a podcast, a visual/slide-based presentation or a creative piece accompanied with a rationale. Where appropriate and with teacher approval, your reflections could also be completed whole class or in small groups in the form of a Socratic Seminar or other discussion-based protocol. Based on the course or experience, your reflections may be weighted more towards one domain than another.
- It is recommended that you reflect throughout the course, experience, or activity. Journaling, check-ins, community circles, and discussions with your teachers or classmates are all ways for you to continually examine your own growth and responses to different topics and issues. Use reflection as an opportunity to reflect on where *you* stand. What connections can you draw between what you knew and believed previously, what you encountered in this course or experience, how those things agreed with or challenged what you knew or believed, and where you stand here and now? What is your opinion? Have the opinions of others shaped or changed your own?
- Keep in mind, on-going reflection makes the completion of quality final reflections much easier!

These questions outline the types of thinking that are part of reflective writing. The reflection paper is a common format for college writing. Reflective writing is a component of civil discourse and civic being because it asks you to acknowledge that your thoughts are shaped by your assumptions and the deep-rooted ideas that you bring with you day-to-day and that your beliefs can grow and change in reaction to new information. In taking the time to note the development of your own positions, you can better appreciate the positions of others.

Directions:

In a format approved by your school's SCR Committee, reflections should include:

Criteria #1: An Overview and Description of the Civic Experience of the Learning Experience

Treat this section like an introduction to a typical paper or project. Introduce the civic learning experience(s) and provide context by including the following information (when applicable):

- Course/activity
- Context/setting
- Your role
- Purpose of course/activity/experience

Criteria #2: Civic Knowledge: What Did You Learn?

Explain Civic Knowledge Gained *Here explain how this experience increased, contributed to, or influenced your civic knowledge. The following prompts are designed to provide you guidance. You do not need to answer all of them. Choose the ones that are most aligned with your experience and how it impacted you.*

- What do you know now about the structure and function of government at the local, state, and/or federal level?
- What did you learn about the law(s) that shape or govern what you investigated, experienced, or took action on?
- What did you learn about the nature of democracy? How has that changed or grown because of this experience?
- What do you know now about your civil and/or educational rights and responsibilities (guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, the Constitution of the State of New York, and federal, state, and local statutes and regulations) that you didn't know previously?
- What did you learn about the history of an issue you studied? How does that history inform current events within our country and in our global society?
- What did you learn about the social, political, and economic forces that have shaped our collective histories and contemporary issues?
- What historical or current perspectives or lenses are you aware of now because of this experience? How do they impact your analysis and understanding of contemporary and historical issues?
- What did you learn about how opportunities for social and political participation in different societies can be described, compared, and contrasted?
- What were the key takeaways, realizations, or lessons you learned during this course or experience? What specific experiences led you to these takeaways, etc.?

Criteria #3: Civic Skills & Actions: What Skills Did You Gain?

Explain how this experience increased, contributed to, or influenced your civic skills and ability to take positive action in your community. You do not need to answer all of them. Choose the ones that are most aligned with your experience and how it impacted you. Areas you may wish to include are:

- How did this experience help you engage in respecting the rights of others? What did that look or sound like?
- Explain how you participated in activities that focused on a classroom, school, community, state or national issue or problem. In what skill area did you notice the most change within yourself?
- In what ways did you influence those in positions of power to achieve extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights?
- Regarding the political process, what was your level of understanding, awareness, or engagement before this experience? What was your level of understanding or engagement after? How did this change your understanding and ability to take positive action?
- How did this experience strengthen your ability to analyze and evaluate sources for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility?
- In what ways did you feel you were engaged in working towards a public good? How did your efforts meet a need in your community?
- What were the key takeaways, realizations, or lessons you learned during this experience? What specific experiences led you to these takeaways, etc.?

Criteria #4: Civic Mindsets: How Did This Experience Change You?

Explain how this experience affected your civic mindsets. You do not need to answer all of them. Choose the ones that are most aligned with your experience and how it impacted you. Areas you may wish to include are:

- Through the lens of civic mindsets, what were the key takeaways, realizations, or lessons you learned during this experience? What specific experiences led you to these takeaways, etc.?
- In what ways did this experience impact how you value equity, diversity, and fairness?
- What perspectives or lenses are you aware of now because of this experience? How do they impact your analysis and understanding of contemporary and historical issues?
- How did this experience help you to develop a sense of empathy towards members of your community with different positions or understandings than your own?
- Where did you get the information that shaped and supported your beliefs before? What, if anything, felt difficult or challenged what you believed? What, if anything, affirmed what you believed already?
- How did this experience affect your understanding of the importance of fundamental democratic principles, such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the rule of law?
- During the course of this unit, did you encounter anything that made you challenge your assumptions about what it means to be civically engaged? Why or why not?
- What did you believe about your role in the civic life of our community before beginning this unit of study? What do you believe now? Did it change for you? In what ways?

Broader Significance

Make connections to your life beyond this project and/or civic learning experience. Answer one or more of the following:

- To what extent has this civic learning experience mattered to you? What lasting impacts if any will it have?
- Where will you go from here? What are your next steps for continuing your work with or on this issue?

Student Guidance adapted from New York City Department of Education Seal of Civic Readiness Handbook Pilot Version, 2021.

Application of Knowledge Essay/Presentation: Guiding Questions and Criteria for Success

The purpose of the application of knowledge essay/presentation/product is to provide students the opportunity to communicate the ways in which various experiences, elective courses, and activities have impacted their civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets. The following are guiding questions and a criterion for success to guide the development of students' application of knowledge products. Application of knowledge products should include three main elements aligned with the domains of civic readiness that address the questions and criteria below:

- **Civic Experiences: What Did You Do?**
 - Describe the course or activity you participated in. Include:
 - The context/setting
 - Your role
 - The purpose of the course/activity/experience
 - Key ideas presented in the course/activity/experience

- **Civic Knowledge: What Civic Knowledge Did You Gain?**
 - Explain and provide examples of how the course or experience increased your civic knowledge. Elements of civic knowledge you may wish to describe may include but are not limited to:
 - The structure and functioning of government, law, and democracy at the federal, state, local, and school levels, and how to participate therein.
 - Civil and educational rights and responsibilities guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, the Constitution of the State of New York, and federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.
 - History, geography, economics, and current events within our country and in our global society.
 - The impact of individual and collective histories in shaping contemporary issues.
 - View and analyze history and current issues from multiple perspectives.
 - The importance of civic rights and responsibilities, such as voting, volunteering, serving on a jury, and the importance of ensuring a free press.

- **Civic Skills, Actions and Mindsets: How Did This Experience Change You?**
 - Explain and provide examples of the impact this course/activity/experience had on you and your civic-related skills and mindset. Elements of civic skills, actions, and mindsets you may wish to explain may include but are not limited to:
 - **Civic Skills and Actions:**
 - Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates, and how to respectfully disagree with other viewpoints and provide evidence for a counterargument.
 - Participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, community, state or national issue or problem.
 - Identify, describe, and contrast the roles of the individual in opportunities for social and political participation in different societies.
 - Work to influence those in positions of power to achieve extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights.
 - Fulfill social and political responsibilities associated with participation in a democratic society and the interdependent global community by developing awareness of and/or engaging in the political process.
 - Analyze and evaluate news (news literacy), media, social media, and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility.
 - Engagement in working toward the public good.
 - **Civic Mindsets:**
 - Valuing equity, inclusivity, diversity, and fairness.
 - Recognizing the need to plan for both current needs and the good of future generations.
 - Empathy, compassion, and respect for the views of people with other opinions and perspectives.
 - Committing to balancing the common good with individual liberties.
 - Demonstrating a sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local and/or national problems.
 - Respecting fundamental democratic principles, such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the rule of law.

Appendix L: Work-Based Learning Definitions and Examples

WBL: Post-Secondary Activities – Examples

Overview: The purpose of this table below is to outline work-based learning definitions and examples for schools. This allows schools to document hours towards the Seal of Civic Readiness and to track postsecondary readiness milestones.

NYSED Categories of Work-Based Learning (see [manual, page 14](#))

- Job shadowing
- Community service/volunteering
- Career-focused research projects
- Industry-based projects
- School-based enterprises
- Entrepreneurship
- Community-based work experiences for students with disabilities

Work-Based Learning Definitions and Examples	
Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship is the process of learning a skilled occupation through both paid on- the-job training under the guidance of experienced workers and related classroom training
Career-Focused Research Project	<p>A research paper designed for students to explore possible career interests. The paper should include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research a career of interest within a career pathway and the many options for career choices within that pathway 2. Research the post-secondary training needed to achieve an entry level position and advancement within the chosen career 3. Research projected future job opportunities in that career 4. Conduct interviews with professionals working in that career* 5. Participate in job shadowing experiences within that career <p>Prepare and deliver a presentation of your research findings to peers</p>
Community Service	Students participate in volunteer experiences that teach them responsibility, community involvement, and an awareness of the needs of others. Community service does not directly connect to the knowledge and technical skills learned in the classroom.
Entrepreneurship	Students plan a start-up company or product involving the research and design of a business plan, financial planning, and marketing strategy as an activity or class project.
Internship	Highly structured, time-limited activity in which students are placed at a worksite to participate in and observe work firsthand. Paid or unpaid activity.
Job	Paid work opportunity, documented through paystubs or signed timecards.

Job Shadow	The student is paired with and observes the workday of an employee for 1-8 hours, interacts with his or her clients or customers, and attends meetings and other appointments with the person they are shadowing.
School-Based Enterprise	An entrepreneurial operation in a school setting that provides goods/services. SBEs are managed and operated by students. Ex. School Store
SYEP	Students completing a Summer Youth Employment Program placement.
Workplace Challenge or Industry-based project	Small groups of students are engaged in solving a real-world problem or a challenge issued by an employer. Students work as a team to identify possible solutions. They then create and deliver a presentation on their solutions to the employer. Ex. Students in a marketing class are tasked by a local retail store to create a social media plan to help the business expand its customer base.
Industry Boot Camp	A boot camp is a fast-track, industry-specific training program that enhances jobseekers' skills to prepare them for employment in high-growth industries. Ex. OSHA-30 training
Sector Bridge Training	Bridge programs contextualize instruction to a specific industry sector and have established relationships with workforce training partners. Usually offered as a prerequisite/skills training before a student can enter the full-time training program. Ex. Healthcare or Construction Career Intensive with St. Nicks Alliance (T2C example)
Sector Training	Sectoral employment training programs are high-quality workforce training programs designed and delivered in partnership with employers, employer associations, and/or worker associations, that address the needs of both businesses and workers.

Appendix M: Sample Extracurricular Activities

Sample Extracurricular Activities		
Clubs	vary	High school clubs that provide opportunities for student civic engagement include student government, mock trial, speech and debate, Key Club, Leo Club, class council, Model UN, etc.
Senior Housing/Nursing Home Volunteering Opportunities	Office Duties	Volunteering, i.e., delivering goods, answering telephones
SPCA/Humane Society/Animal Hospitals	Animal Welfare	Volunteering to clean, groom, or care for animals
Tutoring	Peer tutoring	Participating in a peer tutoring program at a school or community-based organization
Volunteering Experiences	Traditional Community Service	Soup kitchen, city mission, food-drive experiences limited to volunteering as a sole basis of experience.

Appendix N: Criteria for Elective and Advanced Social Studies Courses



Criteria for Elective and Advanced Social Studies Courses (Civic Knowledge) and Electives Rooted in Civic Participation

The Definition of Civic Readiness is organized around four domains:

1. Civic Knowledge
2. Civic Skills and Actions
3. Civic Mindsets
4. Civic Experiences

Directions:

Advanced Social Studies classes and electives rooted in civics must demonstrate evidence of a strong foundation to Civic Readiness to be approved as part of the Seal of Civic Readiness. Use this tool to evaluate individual courses. A course may only be approved if there is evidence that the curriculum will include the four domains of civic readiness. For each aspect of Civic Readiness check off if the course Y (yes) includes this or N (no) does not include this element of civic readiness. Provide examples as appropriate.

For a course to qualify it needs to have at least three components of each domain: Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills and Actions, Civic Experience and Civic Mindsets.

Civic Knowledge: Demonstrate a fundamental and functional knowledge of government, law, history, geography, culture, economics, and current events. These may include inequities within our democratic system at the federal, state, and local level. Students should know how to apply this knowledge to different circumstances and settings.

Practices	Y	N	Examples
Structure and functioning of government, law, and democracy at the federal, state, local and school levels and how to participate			
Civil and educational rights and responsibilities guaranteed by the U.S. constitution, the Constitution of the State of NY and federal, state, and local statutes and regulations			

History, geography, economics, and current events within our country and in our global society			
Impact of individual and collective histories in shaping contemporary issues			
View and analyze history and current issues from multiple perspectives			
The importance of civic rights and responsibilities, such as voting, volunteering,			
Ensuring a free press			

Civic Skills and Actions: Demonstrate a broad array of critical analytic, verbal, communication, media literacy and other skills and participate in a wide variety of actions. Students should practice such actions both inside and outside of school on a regular basis.

Practices	Y	N	Examples
Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates and how to respectfully disagree with other viewpoints and provide evidence for a counterargument			
Participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, community, state or national issue or problem			
Identify, describe, and contrast the roles of the individual in opportunities for social and political participation in different societies			
Work to influence those in positions of power to achieve extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights			
Fulfill social and political responsibilities associated with participation in a democratic society and the interdependent global community by developing awareness of and/or engaging in the political process			
Analyze and evaluate news (news literacy) media, social media, and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility			
Engagement in working toward the public good			

Civic Mindsets: Demonstrate the mindset of a participant in a democratic society. A civic mindset is a commitment to democratic interpersonal and intrapersonal values, virtues, attitudes, and beliefs and informed actions that promote and facilitate meaningful participation in civic life. It is an understanding of self as part of and responsible to larger social groups.

Practices	Y	N	Examples
Valuing equity, inclusivity, diversity, and fairness			
Recognizing the need to plan for both current needs and the good of future generations			
Committing to balancing the common good with individual liberties			
Demonstrating a sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local and/or national problems			
Respecting fundamental democratic principles, such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the rule of law			

Civic Experiences: Participate in developmentally appropriate civic experiences. Civic readiness should be developed in a variety of settings and ways—inside and outside the classroom, across content areas and for multiple purposes. Civic Readiness should be promoted by engaging students in relevant experiences that include students as active participants.

Practices	Y	N	Examples
Completing a civic capstone or civic engagement project			
Engaging in service learning			
Engaging in civil discourse around controversial issues			
Engaging with news and digital tools, such as social media, responsibly			
Participating in civic centered co- curricular and extracurricular activities such as Model UN, Student Government, Debate Club, Student Journalism or Mock Trial			
Participating in school governance			
Voting, volunteering, and participating in community organizations and governmental systems, such as community boards, youth advisory councils etc. to promote continuous improvement			

Appendix O: Middle School Capstone Project Essential Elements

Middle School Capstone Project Essential Elements

Essential Elements	Civic Knowledge	Civic Skills	Civic Mindset
Examine community	Identify situations in which social actions are required.	Participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, community, state, or national issue or problem with the support of the classroom teacher.	Identify opportunities for and the role of the individual in social and political participation in the school, local, and/or state community.
Identify Issues		With the support of the classroom teacher, identify a civic issue (problem) in the community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For example, define and frame questions about events and the world in which we live, and use evidence to answer these questions.</i> 	Identify rights and responsibilities as a citizen of the community and the state.
Conduct Research	Describe how the issue affects the daily lives and shapes the perspectives of similar and different stakeholder groups. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For example, conducting interviews and administering surveys will help students understand the issue from different perspectives, including diverse cultural groups.</i> 	Analyze and evaluate news, media, social media, and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility.	
Analysis		With the support of the classroom teacher, evaluate alternative solutions to address the community problem.	

Essential Elements	Civic Knowledge	Civic Skills	Civic Mindset
Develop Strategies and Solutions		<p>With the support of the classroom teacher, identify or develop solution(s) in the form of a public policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For example, recognize an argument and identify evidence that supports the argument; examine arguments that are related to a specific social studies topic from multiple perspectives; deconstruct arguments, recognizing the perspective of the argument and identifying evidence used to support that perspective.</i> <p>Communicate in a civic context, showing the ability to express ideas, discuss, and persuade when presenting ideas.</p>	
Take Action		<p>With the support of the classroom teacher,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an awareness of and/or engage in the political process. • Create an action plan to enlist local or state authorities to adopt their proposed policy. 	<p>Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and classroom debates; respectfully disagree with other viewpoints.</p> <p>Work to influence those in positions of power to strive for extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights.</p>
Communicate		<p>Participate in persuading, negotiating, and compromising in the resolution of differences and conflict; introduce and examine the elements of debate.</p> <p>Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and debates; respectfully disagree with other viewpoints.</p>	
Reflection			<p>Analyze the experience, reflecting on the process that was implemented, challenges faced, successes, and future civic actions.</p>

Appendix P: Essential Elements of a High School Capstone Project

Essential Elements of New York Civic Readiness Capstone Projects

Participation in government and in our communities is fundamental to the success of American democracy⁶. Students choose to complete the Civic Readiness Capstone project to demonstrate their readiness to make a positive difference in the public life of their communities through the applied combination of civic knowledge, skills and actions, mindset, and experiences. Through this project, students will apply knowledge and skills they have learned through their P-12 Social Studies education, as well as other subject areas.

In this Civic Readiness Capstone project, students will:

- Examine the community to identify a civic issue (problem) facing them, their school, or their community
- Analyze a civic issue (problem), evaluate alternative solutions, design and/or execute a solution for this problem.
- Take informed action to address the civic issue.
- Reflect on what they have learned about their school or community from the Capstone project.
- Make a presentation about their Civic Readiness Capstone project

High School Capstone Projects completed for the Civic Readiness Diploma Seal include these essential elements based on the Definition of Civic Readiness:

Essential Elements	Civic Knowledge	Civic Skills	Civic Mindset
Examine Community	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of the structure and function of government and democracy at the appropriate level, and how to participate therein.</p> <p>Identify, describe, and evaluate the relationships between people, places, regions, and environments by using geographic tools to place them in a spatial context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For example, students can conduct community walks/drives and asset map their community.</i> 	<p>Define and frame questions about events and the world in which we live, form hypotheses as potential answers to these questions, use evidence to answer these questions, and consider and analyze counterhypotheses.</p>	<p>Identify opportunities for and the role of the individual in social and political participation in the school, local, and/or state community.</p>

⁶ Grade 12: Participation in Government and Civics, NYSED Social Studies Practices, 2014, page 45

Essential Elements	Civic Knowledge	Civic Skills	Civic Mindset
Identify Issues	<p>Integrate alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas.</p> <p>Describe the impact of individual and collective histories in shaping contemporary issues.</p>	<p>Analyze a civic issue (problem) in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, include data to describe the number of people affected by the issue, the age/gender/socio-economic status of the people affected by the issue, the geographic impact of the issue, the environmental impact of the issue, etc. <p>Integrate evidence from multiple disciplines into a Capstone Project.</p>	<p>Reflect on how different cultures have values, norms and beliefs that shape how they understand their communities and the problems they face.</p>
Conduct Research	<p>Describe how the issue affects the daily lives and shapes the perspectives of similar and different stakeholder groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, asset mapping, conducting interviews and administering surveys will help students understand the issue from different perspectives, including diverse cultural groups. 	<p>Analyze and evaluate news, media, social media, and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility.</p>	
Analysis	<p>Analyze a civic issue (problem) in the community, describe past attempts to address the issue, generate and evaluate alternative solutions to a civic problem.</p>	<p>Weigh appropriate evidence from multiple disciplines to support claims, which may include political science, history, natural sciences, economics, geography, and sociology.</p>	<p>Reflect on how personal attitudes and beliefs are different and the same from those of other cultures and communities.</p> <p>Integrate what can be learned through engagement with diversity into the Capstone Project.</p>

Essential Elements	Civic Knowledge	Civic Skills	Civic Mindset
Develop Strategies and Solutions	Design and/or execute a solution for this problem.	Evaluate the feasibility of proposed actions to address the community or civic issue. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For example, determine an appropriate course of action; deconstruct and construct plausible and persuasive arguments using evidence.</i> 	Analyze factors that influenced the perspectives of stakeholders involved in the civic issue central to the Capstone Project. Integrate alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas.
Take Informed Action		Design and implement a Capstone Project that engages the school and/or out-of-school community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For example, determine an appropriate course of action; work to influence those in positions of power to strive for extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights; develop an awareness of and/or engage in the political process.</i> 	
Communicate		Communicate in a civic context, showing the ability to express ideas, discuss, persuade, debate, negotiate, build consensus and compromise to organize and conduct civic action. Strategically use different forms of communication to persuade/advocate and express ideas. Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and debates; respectfully disagree with other viewpoints.	

Essential Elements	Civic Knowledge	Civic Skills	Civic Mindset
Reflection			<p>Analyze Capstone Project experience, reflecting on the process that was implemented, challenges faced, project limitations, successes, future civic actions, and transferable skills.</p> <p>Demonstrate and reflect on a sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local and/or national problems.</p>

Based on the New York State Social Studies Practices, Grades 9-12, the New York State Performance Level Descriptors for the Global History & Geography II and the U.S. History & Government Regents exam, the NYSED Definition of Civic Readiness, and the [American Association of Colleges and University VALUE Rubric for Civic Engagement](#).

Relevant Definitions:

1. Asset map: Asset Mapping is a tool that relies on a core belief of asset-based community development; namely, that good things exist in communities and that those things can be highlighted and encouraged — these are assets suited to advancing those communities. There are six categories of community assets: physical, economic, stories, local residents, local associations, local institutions. For more information about asset mapping, visit <https://www.vistacampus.gov/what-asset-mapping>
2. Communication methods include in-person/face-to-face, print, digital (i.e., social media)
3. Perspective(s) - outlook, point of view, position on or towards an issue
4. Stakeholder - a member of a particular status group that holds a specific self-interest regarding a particular social problem or public policy

Appendix Q: Sample Student Assignment for a High School Civic Capstone Project

Sample Student Assignment for a Civics Capstone Project

Participation in government and in our communities is fundamental to the success of American democracy⁷. You have chosen to complete the Civic Readiness Capstone project to demonstrate your readiness to become engaged in the political process in your community. Through this project, you will demonstrate the civic knowledge, skills, and mindset that you have developed through your K-12 Social Studies education. You will need approval from your teacher/mentor to progress through the different steps of this project.

Timeline/Action Plan

Student Name: _____

Mentor Name: _____

List of Meeting Dates if completing as an independent study:

Due Dates:	Civics Capstone Project Steps	Links to product(s)
	<p>1. Examine your community to identify a civic issue (problem) facing you, or your school or your community <i>Suggested activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conduct community walks/drives and asset map the community. Asset Mapping is a tool that relies on a core belief of asset-based community development; namely, that good things exist in communities and that those things can be highlighted and encouraged — these are assets suited to advancing those communities. There are six categories of community assets: physical, economic, stories, local residents, local associations, local institutions. For more information about asset mapping, visit https://www.vistacampus.gov/what-asset-mapping.</i> • <i>Conducting interviews and administering surveys will help you understand the issue from different perspectives, including diverse cultural groups. Be open to alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas.</i> • <i>Think about what you have learned in other coursework you have completed. How can this information help you identify a civic issue?</i> • <i>Critically evaluate what you hear, see, and read in the news and social media about potential civic issues for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility.</i> 	
	Mentor Feedback:	

⁷ Grade 12: Participation in Government and Civics, NYSED Social Studies Practices, 2014, page 45
 New York State Seal of Civic Readiness Manual

	<p>2. Analyze a civic issue (problem) in your school or community Suggested activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe past attempts to address the issue. • Identify, describe, and evaluate the relationships between people, places, regions, and environments by using geographic tools to place them in a spatial context. • Gather data to describe the number of people affected by the issue, the age/gender/socio-economic status of the people affected by the issue, the geographic impact of the issue, the environmental impact of the issue, etc. • Critically evaluate what you hear, see, and read in the news and social media about the civic issue for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility. • Weigh appropriate evidence from multiple disciplines to support claims, which may include political science, history, natural sciences, economics, geography, and sociology. • Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussions and debates; respectfully disagree with other viewpoints. 	
	Mentor Feedback:	
	<p>3. Identify the cause of the civic issue. Suggested activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and frame questions about events and the world in which we live, form hypotheses as potential answers to these questions, use evidence to answer these questions, and consider and analyze counterhypotheses. • Weigh appropriate evidence from multiple disciplines to support claims, which may include political science, history, natural sciences, economics, geography, and sociology. • For example, conducting interviews and administering surveys will help students understand the issue from different perspectives, including diverse cultural groups. • Analyze and evaluate news, media, social media, and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility. 	
	Mentor Feedback:	
	<p>4. Generate alternative solutions to address this civic issue. Suggested activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for and the role of the individual in social and political participation in the school, local, and/or state community. • Learn about the structure and function of government and democracy at the appropriate level, and how to participate therein. • Reflect on how different cultures have values, norms and beliefs that shape how they understand their communities and the problems they face. • Integrate what can be learned through engagement with diversity into the Capstone Project. 	
	Mentor Feedback:	

	<p>5. Evaluate alternative solutions Suggested activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the feasibility of proposed actions to address the community or civic issue with a cost-benefit analysis. • Analyze factors that influenced the perspectives of stakeholders involved in the civic issue central to your Capstone Project. • Organize and participate in a discussion about alternative solutions, setting ground rules to respect the rights of others in discussions so that participants can respectfully disagree with other viewpoints. 	
	Mentor Feedback:	
	<p>6. Develop strategies and solutions Your plan should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of your recommended solution to address the issue, including specific references to the level, primary unit, and body of government that you want to address the issue. • A cost-benefit analysis for potential solutions. • A description of who will be affected by your proposed action. An evaluation of your solution from the perspectives of 3 different stakeholder groups and at least two different cultural groups represented in your community. Identify potential positive and negative outcomes on these different groups from your action. Be sure to comment on ways to mediate negative consequences. <p>The plan should address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where will your solution occur? • When will your solution occur? • How will you communicate about your issue and your action? How will you strategically use different forms of communication* to persuade/advocate, present and express ideas? 	
	Mentor Feedback:	
	<p>7. Take informed action Suggested activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement your proposed action, engaging the school and/or out-of-school community. • Communicate in a civic context, showing the ability to express ideas, discuss, persuade, debate, negotiate, build consensus and compromise to organize and conduct civic action. • Strategically use different forms of communication to persuade/advocate and express ideas. 	
	Mentor Feedback:	

	<p>8. Reflection Suggested activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reflect on what you have learned: Include an analysis of your Civic Readiness Capstone Project experience, reflecting on the relevant civic knowledge and skills that you acquired, the process that you implemented, the challenges you faced, the successes of the project, and how what you have learned will affect future civic actions you may take. Include artifacts (i.e., photographs, video recordings, newspaper articles) that document your actions and reflections.</i> 	
	Mentor Feedback:	
	<p>9. Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prepare and make a presentation about your Civic Readiness Capstone Project.</i> 	
	Mentor Feedback:	

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Appendix R: Seal of Civic Readiness Pilot Regional Coordinators

Big 5

Dawn Bartz, Executive Director, Yonkers City School District
W. Charles Brandy, Director of Social Studies, Buffalo City School District
Ryan Keating, Director of Social Studies, Rochester City School District
Jenna Ryall, Director, Civics for All, New York City Department of Education
Nick Stamoulacatos, Supervisor of Social Studies, Syracuse City School District

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Kathryn Daughton, Literacy and Humanities Coordinator, Onondaga, Cortland, Madison BOCES
Gregory Fredericks, Regional Coordinator of Social Studies and Blended Learning, Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES
Rob Griffith, Professional Development and Curriculum Coordinator, Cattaraugus-Allegheny BOCES
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Donna M. Nowak, Data Specialist, Erie 2 BOCES
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Lisa Kissinger, Academic Administrator, Shenendehowa CSD, Chair 2022 NYS Council for Social Studies Convention
Aruna Patel, Lead Curriculum Development and Professional Learning Manager, New Visions for Public Schools
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Appendix S: Seal of Civic Readiness Author List

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UFT Representatives

Nicholas Norman, Field Liaison, UFT Teacher Center

Appendix T: Updated Frequently Updated Questions

Q1: How can students earn the 1 or 1.5 points for taking the Regents Exam if no Regents Exam was offered and they received an exemption?

Students who received an exemption should use their course average to determine their points for this category. If a student has a passing course average below 85, they should receive 1 point (proficiency) for this category. If a student has a passing course average of 85 or above, they should receive 1.5 points (mastery) for this category.

Q2: If a student from out of state enters high school in 10th/11th grade, can points be awarded for the Regents Exams?

No. The only way a student can earn points on the Regents Exam is by taking the Regents Exam or receiving an exemption.

Q3: Can out-of-state students be awarded points for electives taken out of state?

Yes, if the local Seal of Civic Readiness (SCR) committee determines out-of-state electives rooted in civics are allowable, *and* if the student successfully completes the application of knowledge component.

Q4: What can count for ENL students coming from another country who are missing exams, electives or coming to us with credits from another country.

Out-of-country electives rooted in civics may count if the student successfully completes the application of knowledge component. Social studies courses taken outside of the country may count towards the 1 point for social studies courses.

Q5: Does an advanced class need to be rooted in all four domains of civic readiness to qualify for points on the Seal of Civic Readiness?

No. Advanced social studies courses must be rooted in at least one of the four domains of civic readiness. Most advanced social studies courses qualify because they enhance a student's civic knowledge.

Q6: Does an elective need to be rooted in all four domains of civic readiness to qualify for points on the Seal of Civic Readiness?

Yes. Electives need to be rooted in all four domains of civic readiness, and they must demonstrate evidence of civic participation/civic experiences because these points count towards the *civic participation* category on the Seal.

Q7: Students receive 1 point for completing 4 credits of social studies. Can .5 point be awarded if they take two years of social studies courses?

No. Points cannot be broken up because the four years of social studies courses demonstrate a summation of civic knowledge.

Q8: Can a middle school student earn points on the Seal outside of the Middle School Capstone?

No. Students may only earn 1 point in 7th or 8th grade by completing a middle school capstone project.

Appendix U: Updated Frequently Asked Questions for BOCES

Frequently Asked Questions about the Seal of Civic Readiness Application for BOCES, P-Techs, Regional High Schools, Early Colleges, and other Entities



Seal of Civic Readiness

The Seal of Civic Readiness is a formal recognition that a student has attained a high level of proficiency in terms of civic knowledge, civic skills, civic mindset, and civic experiences. The Seal of Civic Readiness is a distinction on both a high school transcript and diploma that:

- shows the student’s understanding of a commitment to participatory government; civic responsibility and civic values;
- demonstrates to universities, colleges, and future employers that the student has completed an action project in civics or social justice; and
- recognizes the value of civic engagement and scholarship.

Criteria for the Seal of Civic Readiness

In order to obtain the Seal of Civic Readiness, a student must complete all the requirements for a New York State local or Regents diploma and **earn a total of six points with at least two points in Civic Knowledge and at least two points in Civic Participation.** Students may also earn points by completing a middle school Capstone project and/or a high school Capstone project.

BOCES and other educational entities that enroll students from one or more districts, and which do not confer high school diplomas for some (out of district) or all enrolled students, that would like to offer coursework and learning experiences that would provide students with the opportunity to attain the Seal, must complete the Seal of Civic Readiness application through the NYSED Business Portal and receive approval from NYSED.



Frequently Asked Questions

1. In order for a BOCES (CTE) or other alternative program to offer the Seal do all of their participating component districts need to sign off on the BOCES application?

No. If one component district signs off, a BOCES (CTE) or other alternative program may offer the Seal to the students from that one district. For example, if a CTE High School has ten components and six sign off they can offer the Seal to students from those six districts.

2. If a student attends a program from outside those components, must their district also sign off to make them eligible?

Yes. Students from BOCES, P-Tech, and other entities must have their district sign off to earn the Seal of Civic Readiness.

3. Can a BOCES, P-Tech, or other entity school combine points between the home high school and their programs?

Yes. A student may earn the Seal adding together a combination of points earned in their BOCES program, at their local high school, and work completed outside of the school. This approach will require collaboration between the home districts and the BOCES programs. It is strongly recommended that the outside programs work with the local high school's school counseling department.

4. Who is responsible for ordering the Seals, medallions, cords, etc. and delivering them to the home school?

Providing seals or any graduation related regalia is not mandatory. However, this could be provided by either the BOCES or other entities or the component districts.

5. Is the BOCES or alternative program responsible for housing student data and work associated with the Seal and responsible for communicating successful completion of the Seal to the home school?

Yes. However, it is strongly recommended that the BOCES or alternative program develop a strong relationship with the school counseling department of each component district. Please see below for additional guidance on the role of the school counseling department.

6. How can the counseling departments in component schools assist BOCES/Alternative Programs in tracking student points?

Several of the components of the Seal of Civic Readiness (**circled in red below**) can be tracked by school counselors and/or administrators to maintain student privacy. The components would be accessed through student transcripts and records.

Civic Knowledge	Pts.	Civic Participation	Pts.
4 credits of social studies	1	High School Civics Project (limit two times during grades 9-12)	1.5
Mastery level on Social Studies Regents Exam	1.5*	Service-Learning Project (minimum 25 hours) and reflective civic learning essay/presentation/product	1*
Proficiency level on Social Studies Regents Exam	1*	Earned credit in an elective course that promotes civic engagement	.5*
Advanced social studies course(s)	.5*	Middle School Capstone Project (Grades 7 and 8 are only eligible for this point)	1
Research Project	1	Extra-curricular participation or work-based learning experience (minimum 40 hours) and an essay/presentation/product	.5*
		Civics Capstone Project	4

*Students may receive these points more than once.

Testing accommodations recommended in an individualized education program or section 504 should be adhered to. Accommodations Plan must be provided for all State and districtwide assessments administered to students with disabilities, as consistent with State policy. Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.

7. What are some ways counseling departments could assist their students participating in a BOCES/P-Tech/Alternative program?

- The use of an electronic tracking process which is secure and complies with all applicable district, state, and federal privacy policies and laws
- Drafting and updating a “course catalog” which specifies which courses are eligible
- Highlight that participating in the Seal assists in college and career preparedness
- Assisting in facilitating ongoing communication between the school, students, and families

Resources

- [NYSED Seal of Civic Readiness](#)
- [Printable PDF version of the Criteria for the Seal of Civic Readiness](#)
- [The New York State Seal of Civic Readiness Handbook](#)