

DEMOCRACYREADYNY **DECEMBER NEWSLETTER**

Happy Holidays & New Year!

As 2024 comes to a close, we want to express our gratitude to all DemocracyReady NY members and supporters for your tireless efforts working to ensure every New York student has access to a quality civic education.

Whether you're an educator, student, policymaker, parent, researcher, community member, or simply someone who cares about the future of our public schools and our democracy, we thank you for another year of developing the next generation of engaged and informed citizens.

Cheers to 2025! We are excited for what we can accomplish together in the year ahead!

Support our work

UPDATES FROM OUR COALITION MEMBERS

DOSOMETHING

Read one of the books from our [Uncensored: The Best Banned Books of 2024 Reading List](#) and share why you think this book shouldn't be banned. Then tell us how you'll discuss in your community the value these books and stories have on society and you'll be entered for the opportunity to earn a \$500 scholarship! Deadline: January 31, 2025.

FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES

Attention educators! As part of this year's All Community Read of Home is Not a Country and The Distance Between Us, we are thrilled to host a classroom-friendly virtual conversation with these talented authors on March 6, 2025 (12 pm ET).

If your class is participating in the All Community Read and your students have questions for Ms. Elhillo or Ms. Grande, please complete the quick form at the link in bio. You can submit it multiple times if you have more than one student with questions. We will select a few questions and have students record them—we just ask for your name and

email in the form so that we can be in touch if we select one of your student's questions.

[Please submit any questions by Monday, January 20, 2025!](#)

GENERATION CITIZEN

Our Fall/Winter Civics Days are quickly approaching!

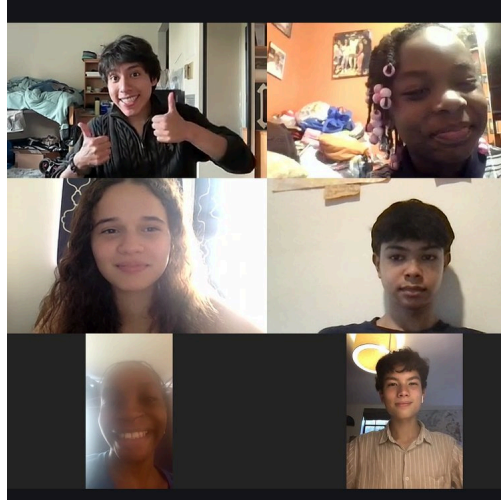
This year, we are hosting Civics Day in New York City on Friday, January 10th. Sign-up with one of the links below to become a community advisor!

DEADLINE Friday, December 20th: [Sign-up here.](#)

INQUIRING MINDS INSTITUTE

Inquiring Minds Institute, along with its student team of 8-17 year olds, developed 3 programs recently for elementary schoolers to grow their civic mindedness - all are available for free.

- [Teacher's guide: 10-15 minutes Voting Protocol for K-5 grades](#)
- [Kids can co-create their classroom constitution](#)
- [Building a democratic classroom - a protocol for morning meeting](#)



Pictured: The team of 8-17 year olds in NYC, including David, Lizzy, Raquel, Bilal, Dina and Miles (missing is Livi) was facilitated by DK Holland of Inquiring Minds.

MIKVA CHALLENGE

Did you know? Mikva Challenge offers a portfolio of curricula to help educators and youth workers develop youth voice and guide informed action. Designed by and for educators, our curricula is adaptable to your needs and aligned with CCSS, C3 standards, Social and Emotional Learning, and equity in the classroom. Empower your students to make a difference! [Learn more here.](#)

THE NYS GRANGE

Read the latest [November/December Empire State Granger Newsletter](#)

PROJECT LOOK SHARP

Project Look Sharp shares media literacy lessons for the holidays including [Christmas Love](#) and [Winter Holidays Around the World.](#)

[ICYMI, In last month's Albany Times-Union](#), Chris Sperry of Project Look Sharp and the Center for Educational Equity's Nan Eileen Mead call for New York State policymakers to take immediate action to strengthen media literacy education and make it a core component of the P-12 learning experience.

UNITED 4 SOCIAL CHANGE

United 4 Social Change offers a range of accessible interdisciplinary civics education courses on philosophy, economics, history, global issues, data, and more at the [Academy 4 Social Change.](#)

YVOTE

The [Youth Civic Hub](#) is a for-youth, by-youth digital platform equipping NYC high school students to be engaged and informed civic actors. The site, developed by high school and college youth from NYC-based nonprofit organizations, features civic resources and opportunities specifically geared towards young New Yorkers.

The Hub's current features include:

- [Opportunity Board](#): Find civic programs, events, and volunteer opportunities in NYC.
- [Weekly Newsletter](#): Sign up for a weekly digest with curated opportunities and events from the Hub's Opportunity Board.
- [Power Map](#): Learn about 90+ elected officials, including their responsibilities, recent legislation or actions and who else in the local government they work with.
- [Civic Glossary](#): Breaking down complicated civics terms with youth-written definitions and examples.
- [Organization Directory](#): Find dozens of NYC-based organizations that serve young New Yorkers.

And more features are on the way! The Youth Civic Hub is a one-stop-shop for NYC teens to plug in to local changemaking efforts and enhance their own civic learning (with great potential for in-classroom use).

IN OTHER NEWS

New York Students Need Media Literacy Education Now

This Fall, as part of U.S. Media Literacy Week 2024, the [DemocracyReady.NY Coalition](#) issued a new report calling on the New York State Education Department to advance *universal access to media literacy education* for all New York students. The report presents a plan to help guide state education officials in taking immediate action to ensure New York does not continue to fall behind other states that have already taken steps to ensure their students become media literate.

In today's world, media literacy is a necessity and must be part of the pathway to a high school diploma. Young people engage with screen media for many hours each day, and media messages influence nearly every aspect of their lives. Media literacy encompasses the knowledge and skills students need to think critically and make responsible decisions about the media they consume, create, and share. It provides a vital set of tools that ensure young people can navigate the new world of social media, artificial intelligence (AI), and other emerging technologies.



[Read Our Plan](#)

Teachers Advancing Civic Learning (TACL)



Scan this QR Code to join now!



- [Join the CivXNow Teachers Advancing Civic Learning network!](#) Teachers Advancing Civic Learning (TACL) is a grassroots network of educators trained and empowered to advance and strengthen civic learning through policy at the local, state, and national levels.
- CivXNow is excited to introduce a [revamped State Policy Menu](#) designed to streamline policymakers' access to K–12 civic education policy recommendations. This new concise format allows for quick comprehension of complex policy issues, making it easier to capture lawmakers' attention and spark meaningful dialogue. Each one-pager provides a brief overview of a key policy challenge and solution; clear, actionable policy recommendations; and links to relevant legislation, reports, and articles.
- Listen to the latest episode of the Next Generation Politics Roundtable podcast, "Addressing Jewish Issues from a Progressive Lens." [Listen here](#)
- Join Media Education Lab's 18th MediaEd Forum! This year's theme, Testing Media Literacy in Times of Crisis, explores the evolving nature of media literacy and its role in addressing global information challenges. The conference will feature discussions on varying stakeholder perspectives and the complexities of defining and advancing media literacy. [Learn More.](#)
- Watch the DemocracyReady NY New York Civic Learning Week 2024 Webinar Series [here.](#)

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

New York Public Library

- Check out New York Public library's [College and Career Pathways Resources](#) calendar to stay up to date with scholarships, internships and program opportunities.

Take a look at this [list of scholarships](#) and consider applying!

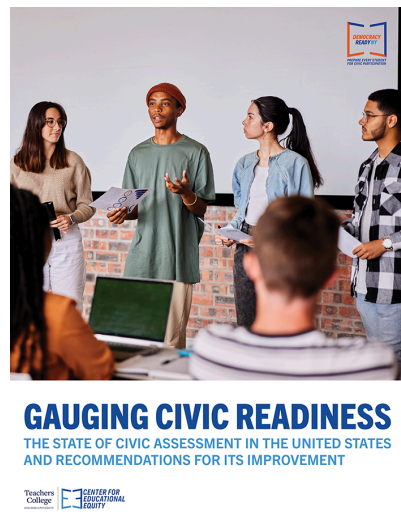
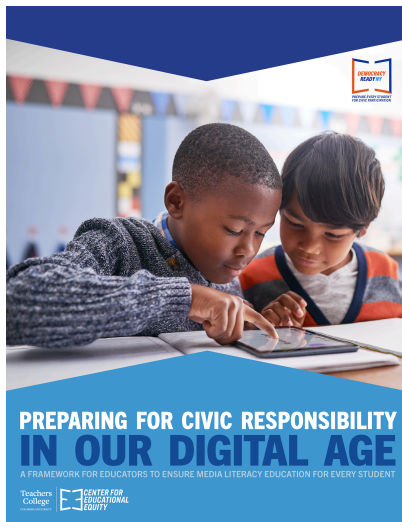
The New York State Museum

Step into a world of festive enchantment this holiday season! The New York State Museum's "School's Out/Museum's In" Holiday Recess programming will offer children and families a week of educational adventures, interactive activities, and joyful celebrations.

From beloved holiday readings and lively Kwanzaa festivities to mesmerizing magic lantern shows and a joyous midday New Year's celebration, there's something magical awaiting visitors of all ages.

[Learn more](#) about the Museum's upcoming family-friendly programming.

READ THE LATEST FROM DEMOCRACYREADY NY



[Preparing for Civic Responsibility in Our Digital Age: A Framework for Educators to Ensure Media Literacy Education for Every Student](#)

- Authored by media literacy expert Faith Rogow, PhD, this media literacy education outcomes framework is written for pre-K-12 school librarians, teachers, school and district administrators, school board members, and the educators and policymakers involved in creating state education standards or teaching pre-service courses for education professionals.

[Gauging Civic Readiness: The State of Civic Readiness in the United States and Recommendations for Its Improvement](#)

- Preparing young people for their civic responsibilities in a democracy is an essential role of schools in the United States. Yet, this report shows that over 80% of states currently ignore the need to assess the full extent to which students are being prepared for capable civic participation.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

[DemocracyReady NY](#) is a statewide, nonpartisan, multigenerational coalition committed to preparing all students for civic participation. Coalition members include educators, researchers, youth leaders, education stakeholder groups, civic education practitioners, youth-development specialists, parents, civic leaders, and advocates. Founded in 2018 by Michael Rebell and Jessica Wolff, the Coalition is convened by the Center for Educational Equity at Teachers College, Columbia University. The Center's mission is to strengthen educational rights for all students through research, legal strategies, and collective advocacy.



Teachers College, Columbia University



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