



DEMOCRACYREADYNY **JANUARY NEWSLETTER**



  Save the date for NY Civic Learning Week 2025! Help us build on the success of New York Civic Learning Week 2024 by planning an event or activity to celebrate the civic mission of schools.

Whether you're an educator, a student organization, a community group, neighborhood institution, civic group, or youth-serving organization, you can participate by developing programming that advances civic education and participation!

[Let us know](#) how you're celebrating and we'll share your event!

Stay tuned for more details on DemocracyReady NY's annual free webinar series!

[Learn More](#)

UPDATES FROM OUR COALITION MEMBERS

ALLIANCE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

Whether it's your first trip to the New York State Capitol or you're a seasoned advocate, don't underestimate the power you hold as a constituent. One of the battles we're fighting this year is to protect NYC's schools from a \$400 million cut to its expected Foundation Aid funding, which threatens the futures of our most vulnerable students.

[Join us](#) from across the state as we head to Albany on February 4 - transportation provided - to make sure our demands are heard! Governor Hochul's intentions through her executive budget to make life just "a little better" for families and kids isn't nearly enough, as New Yorkers today call loudly for bold, transformative change.

CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN

Are you joining us for the 2025 Kids Can't Wait Advocacy Day in Albany on February 11th? Buses are being organized from Buffalo and Rochester -

whether you are traveling with other advocates or meeting us there, ALL are welcome from every part of the state!

Kids Can't Wait will host virtual training and information sessions closer to the date so you can confidently talk with legislators and advocate for evidence-based solutions - keep an eye out for more details from the Kids Can't Wait Campaign! [Register now](#)

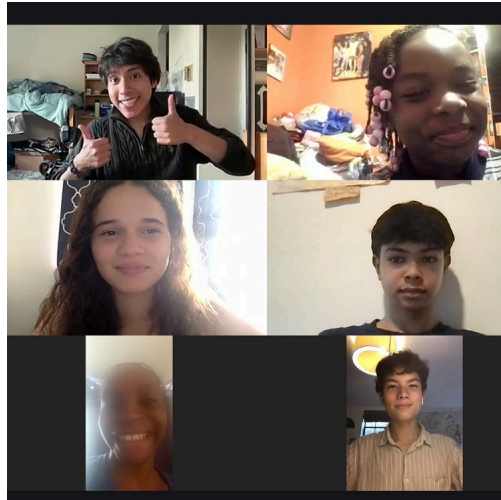
FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES

[Download](#) the Fostering Civil Discourse: Difficult Classroom Conversations in a Diverse Democracy guide. The tools and strategies in this guide will help you prepare students to engage in difficult conversations on topics that matter to them, to their communities, and to our world.

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 [January/February Empire State Granger Newsletter.](#)

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES

Want to learn more about Human Rights and how you can incorporate them into your classroom? Interested in joining a community of readers? [Join us](#) for our Inaugural Human Rights Online Book Club sponsored by the NYSCSS Human Rights Committee. Our first meeting will take place via Zoom on February 7, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., where we will be discussing the book A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of A Boy Soldier by Ishmael Beah.

NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

[Join us](#) for a morning educational program to gain perspective on proposed legislative and spending priorities. The agenda will include an in-depth review of the Executive Budget proposal, discussions with legislators and state policymakers, and NYSSBA staff members helping to prepare you to advocate on behalf of your school community.

Lobby Day 2025 is a separate registration. Please register [here!](#)

PROJECT LOOK SHARP

Read the latest [January newsletter](#) for new lessons on Civics and Math, Graphing the Vote: Age, Gender, and Time, Lessons Black History Month,

and Decoding Challenging Topics: The January 6th Insurrection.

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](#).

UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

There is still time for graduating students to apply for an Albert Shanker College Scholarship! We believe that education is the key to a fulfilling and successful life for our students. This opportunity will help foster a stronger sense of belonging and inspire the motivation they need to thrive in higher education. [Learn more here!](#)

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

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



**NEW YORK STUDENTS NEED
MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION NOW**
A STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR NEW YORK STATE



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!



CivXNow
A PROJECT OF ICIVICS

- [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, "When History Stumbles, Justice Rumbles: Lessons from the Law." [Listen here](#)
- Watch the DemocracyReady NY New York Civic Learning Week 2024 Webinar Series [here](#).

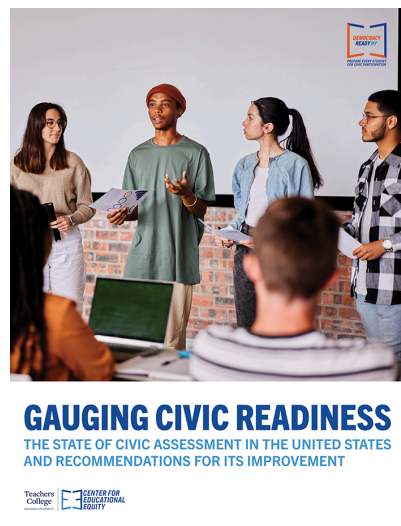
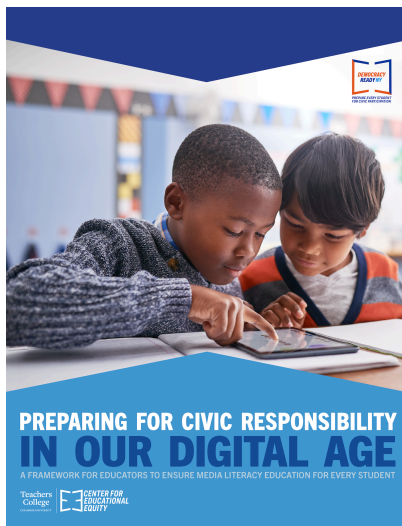
YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

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!

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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