

ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

The Democracy Schools Self-Assessment Rubric is a tool to help teams reflect on the various indicators related to Organizational Culture and Learning Experiences in your school. The rubric provides a scale of Emerging, Proficient and Exemplary ratings with examples that show Democracy School Network successes that address the indicators within each category as well as where you may be able to find evidence to complete the assessment.



SUGGESTED PROCESS

1. Before completing the self-assessment tool, be sure to review and analyze your survey data and summary dashboard.
2. Gather your interdisciplinary team of a minimum 4-6 members, including an administrator and student representatives that are reflective of the student body.
3. Identify evidence that your team can draw on to complete the rubric, including your Democracy School Student Survey Dashboard, 5Essentials data, school climate data, school discipline data, student focus groups, etc. There are additional examples of evidence you can draw on in [Appendix A](#).
4. Decide how you will gather input and feedback from the rest of the school community (teachers from across content areas, staff, parents/families, and community partners if applicable). You can use the suggested discussion questions in [Appendix B](#) during a faculty meeting, department meetings, or with student groups to include others in the process.
5. Each member of the school site team should set aside approximately an hour to complete the below rubric as best they can based on their experiences and observations using the below measures of growth:

Exemplary = Strong evidence suggests that the school consistently demonstrates a majority of the indicators in this category

Proficient = Evidence suggests that the school demonstrates several of the indicators in this category most of the time

Emerging = Evidence suggests that the school demonstrates a few of the indicators in this category some of the time

Not Evident = The school has not yet implemented practices related to the indicators in this category

6. Then the team should set aside 1-2 hours to come together, discuss the ratings each person noted, and review other feedback drawn from the school community. Then the team can come to an agreement about the school's performance on each item, and complete the Team Review in [Appendix C](#). Next, think together about your school's initial goals using [Appendix D](#): Team Reflection and the following reflection questions:
 - a. What are 2-3 areas you would like to improve upon or deepen/get better at in the coming year based on your review and reflection and why?
 - b. What are some initial ideas of action steps to work toward your goals?
 - c. Who else at your school can be involved to help move this forward?
 - d. What external supports (i.e. district staff, community partners, local organizations or agencies, DS Network, etc.) might help you achieve your goals?
7. Submit Appendix C, D, and your compiled notes of evidence by June 1st.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Design/Teaching Strategy
- Foundational Civic Knowledge
- Discussion of Current and Controversial Issues
- Simulations
- Informed Action/Service Learning
- Extracurricular Activities

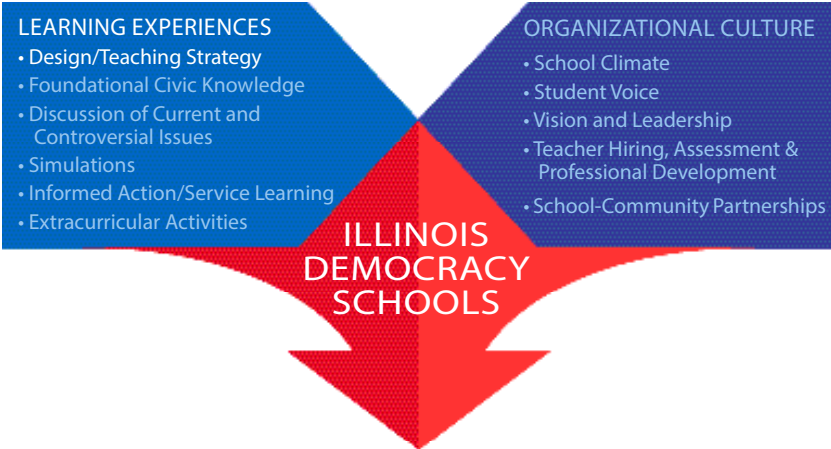
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- School Climate
- Student Voice
- Vision and Leadership
- Teacher Hiring, Assessment & Professional Development
- School-Community Partnerships

ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS



Youth are informed, actively participate in their communities, and have healthy civic dispositions



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

INDICATORS

- Making explicit civic learning connections and applications across all content areas
- Including fiction and non-fiction texts representing multiple, diverse perspectives that engage with civic, political and social issues in writing, speech, and other media
- Drawing on students' knowledge, lived experiences, and essential and supporting questions to engage in critical and sustained inquiry
- Engaging in critical analysis of off- and online information by judging its accuracy and credibility, developing and posing questions, investigating a range of sources, and discussing the tensions and multiple perspectives surfaced
- Employing group projects and activities that foster teamwork, collaboration, and student leadership
- Supporting students to utilize digital tools in order to investigate issues they care about, engage in dialogue, circulate and produce media, raise awareness, and create change
- Promoting an understanding of diversity (gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation) and developing mutual respect for others
- Supporting students to build confidence as well as a sense of responsibility and efficacy in order to make a difference in their schools and communities

Learning Experiences Assessment: Instruction

DESIGN/TEACHING STRATEGY

Teachers design curriculum and utilize democratic teaching strategies in order to cultivate students' civic knowledge, skills, dispositions, and critical thinking across disciplines and extracurricular activities by:



RATING (check one)

Exemplary

Proficient

Emerging

Not Evident

DESIGN/TEACHING STRATEGY

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

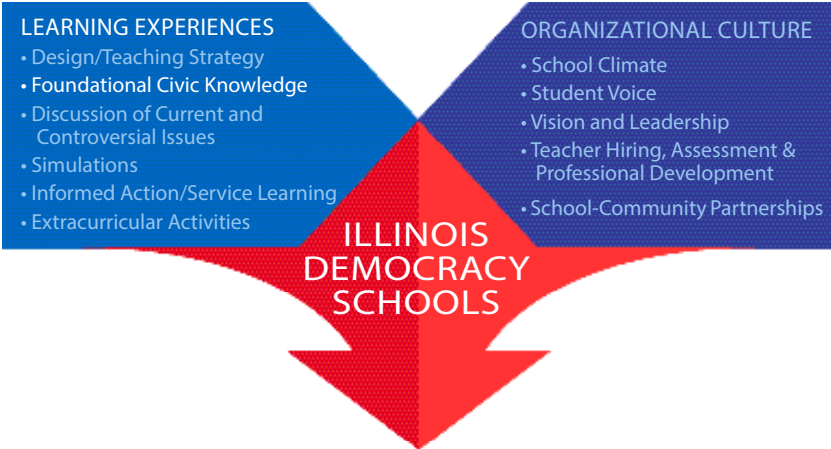
DuQuoin High School has embraced the opportunity to address a global issue by making connections across the curriculum. In English II, students read a fictional book entitled *Sold* by Patricia McCormick; this book exposes the truth about human trafficking. Students are drawn to the story about 13-year-old Lakshmi who is from a very impoverished village in Nepal and becomes a victim of human trafficking, due to her family's poverty. Students then read other texts that offer diverse perspectives on this current social issue. This introductory experience in English II then connects to students' experiences in other classes. They read nonfiction articles discussing the different types of trafficking that happen all over the world, including the United States. Students read articles about bonded labor, child labor, domestic servitude, forced labor, forced marriage, and sex trafficking. Each article includes a real story of a person who was forced into that particular form of slavery, and how they eventually escaped. In the Current Events course, students analyze this as a contemporary issue, and look for solutions to this problem. Spanish classes also explore this issue as a regional problem that plagues several countries in central and South America. This experience is made even richer by utilizing some community resources: two guest speakers. The first is from Bangladesh, who challenges students to explore the connection between culture and human trafficking. The second speaker works for International Justice Mission and discusses the efforts of the International Justice Mission to end slavery across the globe. This has resulted in much student interest in taking action to alleviate this appalling world problem.



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

WHAT EVIDENCE OR EXAMPLES COME TO MIND?

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR GOALS?



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

INDICATORS

- The major themes and significant events in the history of the United States as well as the tensions in our democracy and systemic issues related to race, class, gender, socio-economic status and sexual orientation
- The Constitution and founding principles as applied to the past and present
- The structure of government, at local, state, and federal levels
- The powers, authority, legitimacy, and limitations of each level of government (federal, state, and local) as well as the civic power of individuals and groups
- Various public policies (local, state, national, or international) and their impact on issues that matter to students
- The relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs
- The manner in which people, groups and communities create, interact with, and change structures of power, authority, and governance (including voting, lobbying, non-violent conflict, etc.) as well as attend to the root causes of problems in the past and present
- The ways in which digital platforms and tools have created opportunities and challenges for civic and political engagement

FOUNDATIONAL CIVIC KNOWLEDGE

Teachers engage students in learning about the following core concepts as they relate to various disciplines:



RATING (check one)

Exemplary

Proficient

Emerging

Not Evident

FOUNDATIONAL CIVIC KNOWLEDGE

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

O'Fallon Township High School provides high-quality civic learning experiences through a multitude of courses offered to the student body and extracurricular activities. Course offerings include Civics, Social Issues, International Relations, The American Legal System, and United States History. The curriculum of Civics focuses on students developing an understanding about the function and operation of state and federal government and the rights and responsibilities afforded with citizenship by exploring the language and principles embedded in the founding documents of American democracy. The Social Issues curriculum is designed to expose students to a variety of current social, political, and cultural problems. Students participate in an approach that allows them to learn about an issue from various perspectives, research differing points of view, and prepares them to take informed action on the topic. A component of International Relations is to encourage students to participate and attend area Model United Nations Conferences. Students research, discuss and debate international issues, as they role play a citizen of another country. The American Legal System is a semester long course where students study constitutional law and concepts related to criminal and civil law. Emphasis is placed on the role of the Supreme Court interpreting the Constitution and the major cases it has decided. The curriculum of the United States History course emphasizes the major themes and significant events in the history of the United States as well as the historic and perpetual tensions of our democracy. Additionally, teachers across disciplines at O'Fallon include direct instruction, simulations, discussions and other student led activities to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to develop a strong foundation in civic knowledge.



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WHAT EVIDENCE OR EXAMPLES COME TO MIND?

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR GOALS?

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Design/Teaching Strategy
- Foundational Civic Knowledge
- Discussion of Current and Controversial Issues
- Simulations
- Informed Action/Service Learning
- Extracurricular Activities

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- School Climate
- Student Voice
- Vision and Leadership
- Teacher Hiring, Assessment & Professional Development
- School-Community Partnerships

ILLINOIS
DEMOCRACY
SCHOOLS



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

INDICATORS

- Critically and productively engaging with the local, national, and international issues and events that animate our political system as well as issues based on student choice
- Addressing meaningful and timely questions about societal problems and ethical dilemmas that deserve both students' and the public's attention and that link to core curricular goals
- Locating or creating multimodal learning materials to provide students relevant background information in order to form their own opinion, develop effective arguments and counter arguments on varying sides of an issue, and attend to multiple points of view
- Employing several different models for discussion and ways of making joint decisions as well as demonstrating the pros and cons of each
- Developing guidelines to ensure inclusive, respectful, productive, and student-led discussions where students listen to understand, clarify, corroborate and question while attending to multiple perspectives and underrepresented voices
- Creating time for reflection and processing - including consideration of changes in viewpoint and use of evidence

DISCUSSION OF CURRENT AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Teachers provide opportunities across disciplines for students to take an active role in current and controversial issue discussions and deliberation by:



RATING (check one)

Exemplary

Proficient

Emerging

Not Evident

DISCUSSION OF CURRENT AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

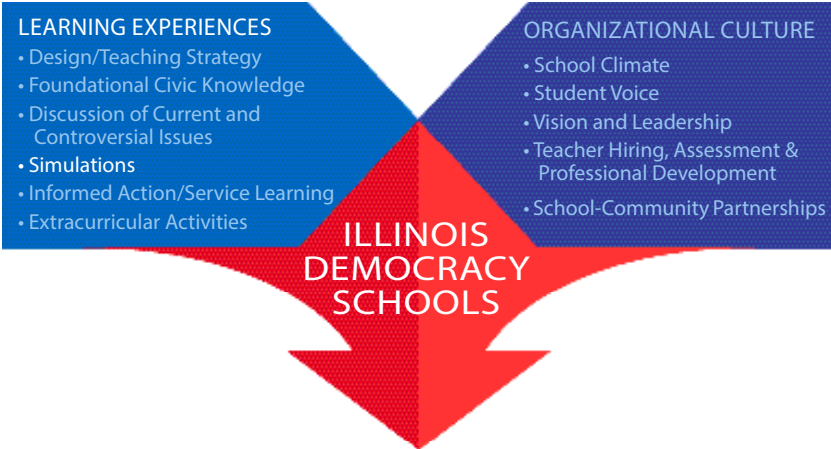
Wheaton Warrenville South High School prides itself on offering rich civic learning experiences to its students. In Social Studies courses, students routinely research and discuss international, national and local issues. The English curriculum is centered on argumentation and the practice of civil discourse. Formal debates and Socratic seminars are used by many teachers, as they have found these strategies useful for fostering empathy for diverse opinions. The use of cooperative groups has had a major impact in providing a meaningful structure for encouraging student voice within groups, while giving them a method for sharing their conclusions. This format is a schoolwide protocol and allows students to form opinions and debate issues such as the legalization of marijuana, requiring photo IDs for voting, and the challenges faced by large metropolitan areas like Chicago. The most recent venture in promoting exemplary civic learning is the "Judge Gavel Program", where teachers are awarded for trying out new simulations, court cases, and other methods that foster discourse that emphasizes the sharing of multiple perspectives. Teachers who model these practices are awarded a special gavel that states "Wheaton Warrenville South Democracy School: Fostering Communities of Educated, Informed and Engaged Citizens." This message serves as a constant reminder of the importance of actively engaging students in discussion about their world.



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INDICATORS

- Reserving sufficient time for each simulation in order to learn challenging skills and concepts and build background knowledge
- Discussing how lessons learned in the simulation may apply in other contexts, including in local communities and society
- Building on student life experiences and knowledge of democratic structures and institutions
- Creating time for reflection and processing to understand the concepts and application of simulations

SIMULATIONS

Teachers provide opportunities for students to participate in simulations--including role-playing activities, problem solving, consideration of dilemmas, interactive case studies and scenarios, and online games--that allow students to learn about issues and practice civic skills in multiple disciplines by:



RATING (check one)

Exemplary

Proficient

Emerging

Not Evident

SIMULATIONS

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

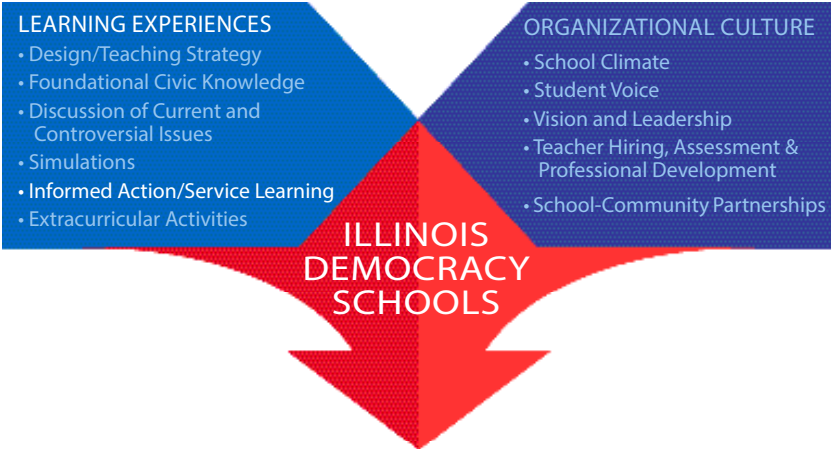
Round Lake High School students are offered the opportunity to partake in a variety of democratic simulations. There are obvious opportunities for simulations ingrained into the curriculum of their government courses. These include mock congressional debates, bill hearings, and jury deliberations. However, these democratic simulations are not limited to the social sciences. Ninth grade students are also exposed to jury deliberations and discussions on race relations through the acting out of Twelve Angry Men. Furthermore, the entire school participates in an annual mock election through partnerships with the Lake County Board of Elections and the League of Women Voters, who are both partners they have worked with in previous years. Additionally, as part of keeping true to the Democracy School mission, the school has created another democratic simulation that incorporates student voice. The Panther Action Congress is a truly representative student government with reserved spots for students from all levels, including English language learners and students with IEPs. In order to be as inclusive as possible, supports for students are provided as needed and all of the meetings times take place during the school day as a means of allowing all to participate.



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INFORMED ACTION/SERVICE-LEARNING

Teachers provide opportunities for all students, regardless of academic skill or ability, to engage in civic action by using knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs on a school, local, regional, state or broader level through preparation, action and reflection by:



INDICATORS

- Helping students differentiate between different forms of civic participation--including face-to-face and online tactics--and identify when to use various strategies depending on the goal, audience, and context
- Developing central leadership roles where students lead the preparation, action and reflection
- Develop a plan to address identified needs in the community by building upon previous civic learning experiences, student knowledge of the community, investigation and research, and discussion
- Engaging participants in informed, meaningful and personally-relevant action that may include direct action, indirect action, research, advocacy, or a combination of the approaches that are available
- Facilitating opportunities for participants to engage in an ongoing reflection process that includes deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society, showcasing what and how they have learned, and connecting learning to essential question(s) of the unit/course
- Assessing the impact of the project, the ability to meet specified goals, and feedback from community partners (if possible)

RATING (check one)

Exemplary Proficient Emerging Not Evident

INFORMED ACTION/SERVICE-LEARNING

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

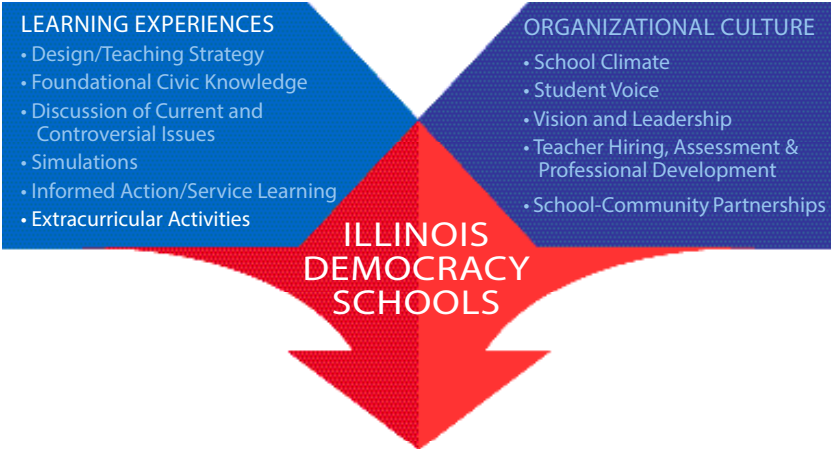
The Monarch Butterfly project at J. Sterling Morton West High School is a student-citizen science human impact project aligned to the performance expectations of the Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core and is about much more than saving monarchs. The primary goal is for students to learn how to solve real world problems, save one of the most endangered species in the world, and help build a better community around a common cause. It has connected Morton West students to students, citizens, and scientists all across America, Mexico, and Canada who are also urgently working on this endeavor. Students began by using scientific inquiry to study existing pollinator habitats to gather knowledge about biodiversity and the ecological needs of monarch butterflies. Building on this, they worked to determine a solution: to plan, design, and create a monarch butterfly habitat to be constructed on school property. Each student has a unique leadership role to play in their group: the team scientist, technologist, engineer, or mathematician, thus ensuring that each student is invested in the project regardless of skill and ability. In addition to designing the habitat, each student devises a solution to a separate problem (their passion project), where they write a song, create an educational sign, make a film, create artwork or come up with anything they can that invokes the everyday person to stop and think about their impacts on their environment, and ideally, makes them change their behavior to reduce those impacts on the environment. Parents, teachers, administrators and all students are invited to view this work at an end of the year exhibition to better connect the local community to this project.



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INDICATORS

- Teaching concrete skills that are valuable in civil society, which could include managing a budget, facilitating meetings, advertising events, choosing and rotating leaders, and dealing with individuals who break group rules or fail to contribute
- Helping students to develop and utilize agency as a member of their various communities
- Helping students to form strong social bonds and support networks with adults outside of the family, peers with different lived experiences and political perspectives, and like-minded peers
- Recognizing and confirming students' identities such as racial and ethnic identity, LGBTQ, gender, ability, political, etc.
- Modeling and promoting inclusion, equity, and constructive dialogue and deliberation while attending to multiple perspectives
- Welcoming students to join or start groups that address their genuine interests
- Cultivating student leadership in a range of meaningful ways

Learning Experiences: Activities

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

School staff lead structured, organized, regular, and long-term extracurricular activities that foster civic learning and engagement and are accessible to, representative of, and attend to the needs and interests of the student body by:



RATING (check one)

Exemplary

Proficient

Emerging

Not Evident

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

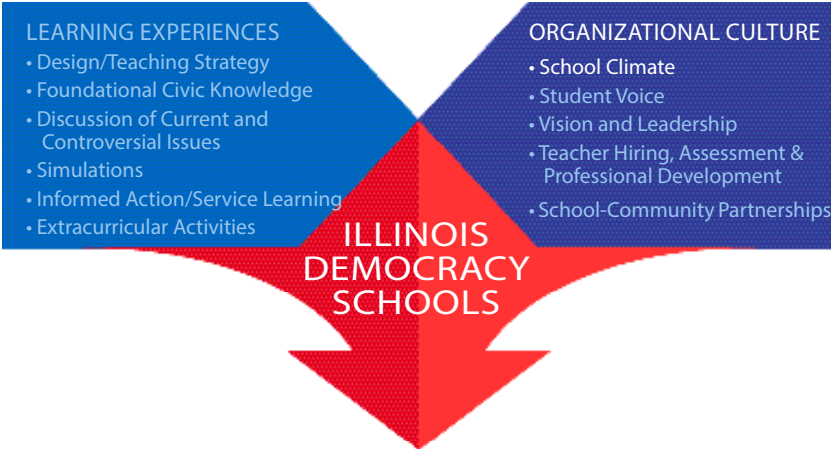
Maine East High School supports several extracurricular activities that support the civic mission of a Democracy School. The Democracy Club (their political engagement group) helped develop and fund a program for students to get wi-fi hotspots for home use where there was no Internet access, which then enabled students to use their school-issued Chromebooks not only for school work but also for interaction in the greater world. Students participate in the Democracy School Leadership Team (which includes teachers and students), where they are currently investigating the implementation of an online platform for student discussion of issues and topics connected to their school life and to the greater political climate. The school also sponsors a variety of cultural clubs like the South Asian Club, Muslim Student Association and Black Student Union to provide forums for a variety of student backgrounds to be supported. Every year the school sponsors an International Celebration Day where the student groups proudly share the music, dance and food that represents their cultural traditions. And in 2018, students were supported in their efforts to organize a school walkout, passionately speaking on the need for greater gun regulations, as a protest on the topic of gun violence in schools after the Parkland, Florida shooting tragedy.



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WHAT EVIDENCE OR EXAMPLES COME TO MIND?

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR GOALS?



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Organizational Culture Assessment

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Schools create and maintain a positive and democratic school climate that promotes students' civic development, engagement, and sense of belonging by including:



INDICATORS

- A clean, welcoming environment with visual reminders of the school's civic mission and representation of the student population
- Copies of the school's mission statement and/or values displayed throughout the school, referenced regularly, and updated periodically based on student voice and students' lived experiences
- Classrooms and hallways decorated with work reflective of teachers' and students' civic engagement
- Teachers and administration serving as role models of civically engaged community members and who are candid about their own civic engagement when appropriate
- Principals and teachers attending to student identities and interacting positively and respectfully with them
- School policies, practices, and infrastructure supporting a set of civic norms and values
- Restorative and democratic disciplinary practices work towards racial equity in application and strategy through whole school adoption and training

RATING (check one)

Exemplary

Proficient

Emerging

Not Evident

SCHOOL CLIMATE

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

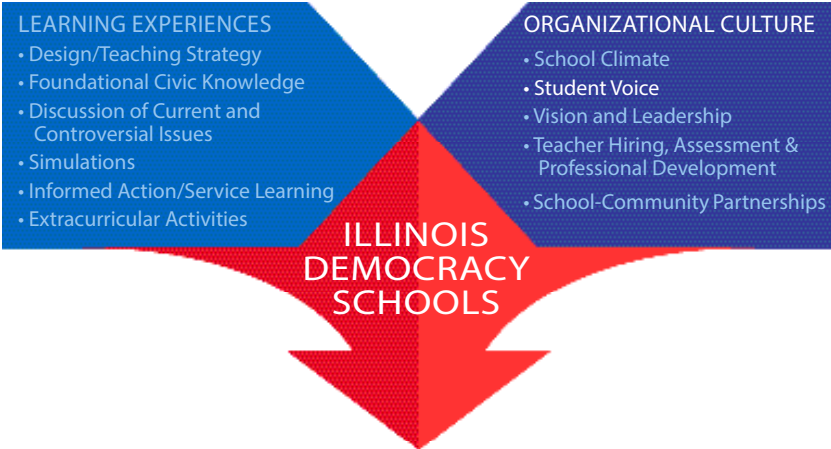
An integral part of Metea Valley High School is the Metea LIFE statement, which is prominently displayed throughout the building. This mission to Live with Integrity, Inspire a Passion for Learning, Foster Positive Relationships, and Expect Equity and Excellence for All is woven into the fabric of the school. Whether displayed on classroom posters, brandished on stairway risers, or used as talking points during a Principal address, it is a common message on what the school values, how the school community should act, and how the school approaches learning. Beyond the LIFE statement, Metea is an environment that seeks to involve all students. Through its activities, events, and programs, diversity is celebrated. Students are encouraged to have a voice in their school and community through clubs and activities such as student government, the Principal Advisory Board, and Metea Media; all eagerly invite students to share their authentic voices in creating the school environment. Teachers work purposefully to build positive and meaningful relationships with students, and when necessary, implement restorative justice principles in disciplinary situations. And as a part of their orientation, new teachers are trained on the civic mission of the school and how the Metea LIFE statement supports that mission.



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

WHAT EVIDENCE OR EXAMPLES COME TO MIND?

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR GOALS?



STUDENT VOICE

Schools provide formal, informal, and regular opportunities for student voice and student decision-making that is impactful at various levels of the school community by:



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INDICATORS

- Integrating student voice in regards to curriculum, assessments, and classroom procedures and practices
- Establishing transparent and ongoing schoolwide mechanisms to measure, gauge, analyze, and respond to student voices that are representative of the student body
- Providing forums for student voice on questions, tensions, and issues that impact the student body
- Informing students of their rights and responsibilities in school
- Facilitating school-wide democratic deliberation on school issues through school media and extra-curricular programs

RATING (check one)

Exemplary Proficient Emerging Not Evident

STUDENT VOICE

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

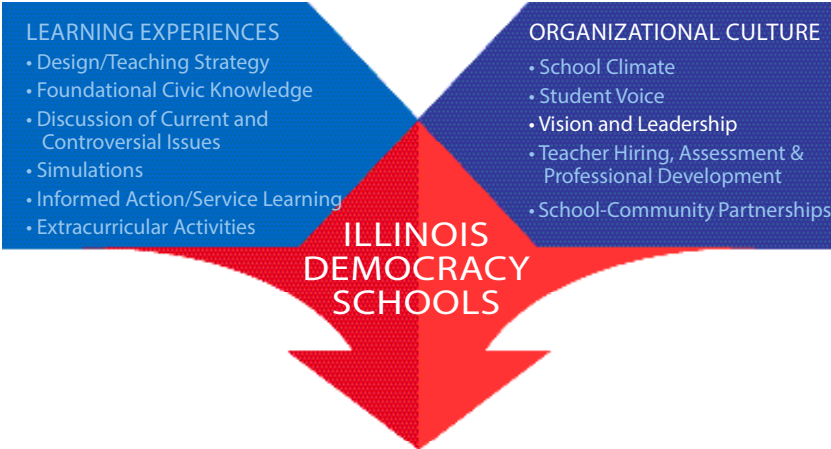
George Washington High School has created an exceptional number of opportunities to foster student voice. The Student Voice Committee is open to all students, meets twice weekly both before and after school, and fosters student leadership. The SVC conducts surveys to find out the most pressing issues students face, research possible solutions to these issues, and then meets with adult power holders to address the concerns and make proposals for change. Washington students are also involved on many committees that are typically reserved for administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. Each year the 9th through 11th grade students vote for their representative on the Local School Council for the following school year. This representative has some voting power and regularly reports out about student concerns at the monthly meetings. Meanwhile other students serve on the Instructional Leadership Team, School Improvement Committee, Student Voice and Civic Engagement Team, and Postsecondary Team. In these ways our student body can express their opinions when adults are making decisions that affect their education.



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

WHAT EVIDENCE OR EXAMPLES COME TO MIND?

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR GOALS?



VISION & LEADERSHIP

School leaders have a clear commitment to the civic mission of the school, dedicate necessary resources to sustain this vision, and ensure all students have equitable access to civic learning by:



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INDICATORS

- Engaging all stakeholders in developing and maintaining the vision of the school and developing a common understanding of how the school will reach its civic goals
- Enabling teachers to exercise autonomy, responsibility, and creativity to introduce thought-provoking, controversial, and civic topics in the classroom
- Allocating time, money, flexibility, and staffing that is reflective of the communities the school serves to ensure that civic learning is a valued, reliable, and core part of the curriculum across disciplines and grade levels
- Leveraging policies, resources, and political capital at the district level to support teachers in integrating civic learning and creating equitable opportunities for students' civic growth
- Articulating how students will engage in civic learning and engagement across grade levels at the school and district level

RATING (check one)

Exemplary Proficient Emerging Not Evident

VISION & LEADERSHIP

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

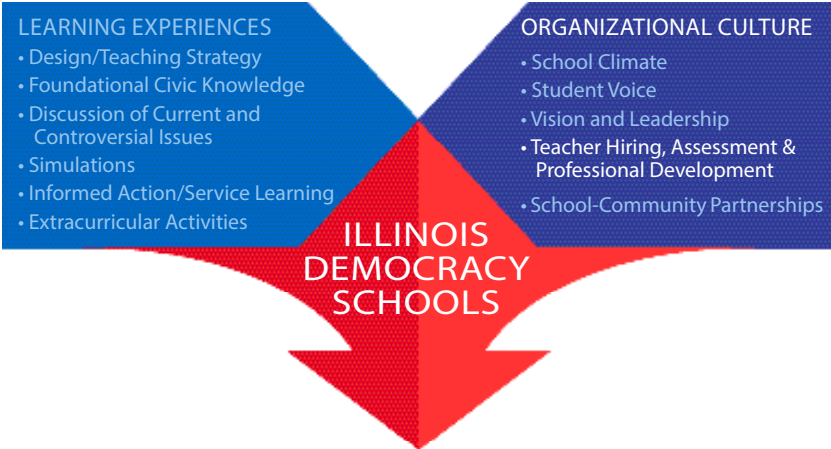
Shawnee High School is deeply rooted in civic learning---from a staff-initiated Veterans Wall Memorial with over 1000 names that are displayed, to its daily routines, thought-out processes, inclusive practices, and committed staff. This is a place where teachers are given the freedom to design their own curriculum where they incorporate controversial issues, simulations, and other proven practices in civic learning. The Social Science teacher uses mock elections and mock trials; the English teachers and science teacher find creative ways to infuse simulations; the art teacher encourages her students to create sketches that will later be turned into t-shirts to raise money and awareness for various causes, which the entire school will later study. These teachers readily collaborate with each other and discuss controversial issues in their classes, encouraging critical thinking. The administration also trusts the social sciences to bring media into the classroom on a regular basis to help bring awareness to their ongoing service learning project about saving the levees that protect their district from the Mississippi River, and they welcome politicians from both sides of the aisle into the school so students can educate them on flooding issues. Additionally, the principal is an integral member of the Democracy School team and encourages her teachers to dream big when it comes to improving the school's climate.



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WHAT EVIDENCE OR EXAMPLES COME TO MIND?

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR GOALS?



TEACHER HIRING, ASSESSMENT & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

School leaders have a commitment to hiring, assessing, and developing staff that can carry out the civic mission of the school as well as attend to equity and teachers' and students' identity and lived experiences by:



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

INDICATORS

- Hiring mission-driven staff through democratic processes that include student, staff and teachers
- Ensuring that teachers and staff contribute to processes and decision-making at the school
- Providing resources and consistent training for staff members on the components of and approaches to integrating civic learning across disciplines and grade levels through conferences, professional learning communities, peer coaching, planning/collaboration time with colleagues, curricular models, and other available formal and informal opportunities
- Setting aside time for teachers to reflect and refine their curriculum and practice in order to integrate civic learning
- Encouraging teachers to learn from their students, colleagues, families, and community members
- Ensuring that professional development (PD) opportunities are guided by teacher and student feedback

RATING (check one)

Exemplary Proficient Emerging Not Evident

TEACHER HIRING, ASSESSMENT & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

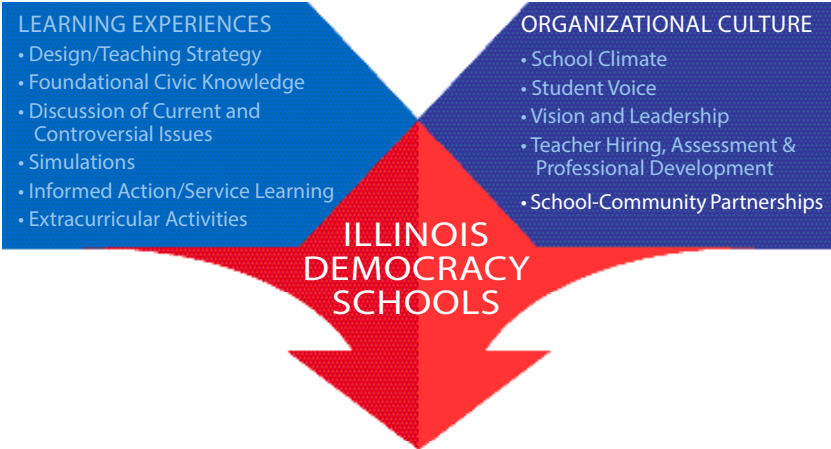
A civic-minded school climate features a strong commitment to ongoing professional learning for staff. And at York High School, this is demonstrated in several ways. Teachers have opportunities to learn from each other, as well as from specialists in the field. A long-standing practice is the 'grassroots, in house' Institute Day. In this model, any teacher can propose a seminar to present; staff then sign up to learn from each other on topics such as student-led discussion, de-escalation, and formative assessment. Another opportunity for teachers to learn from each other is an ongoing, less formal practice: posting a 'pineapple sign' outside a classroom if a teacher is open to collegial peer observations that day. Another developing practice is the use of department meetings for small instances of professional learning. Six late start mornings are scheduled, where all departments experience 'mini-PDs'. In addition, each department chair has been paired with an instructional coach. Together, the chair and coach develop the PD plan based on feedback from the teachers within each department. Instructional coaches also perform a 'coaching round' with all first- and second-year teachers, and they are available to help teachers refine lessons, target certain skills, and develop new ideas. In a similar fashion, coaches and admin have developed mini-PDs for the entire faculty. PDs are 30-minute 'bite-sized' portions of pedagogical instruction and cover practices that teachers have requested. Additionally, when teachers attend an outside conference, they share what they learned with other department members at one of the late start days. Teachers also learn from each other through weekly PLCs that examine student work and discuss instructional methods. This multi-layered approach for professional development gives many opportunities for York's teachers to continually refine their pedagogical skills.



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SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

School leaders and staff ensure that the school and its community are a resource for each other and that there are frequent and meaningful interactions with families and community partners through:



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INDICATORS

- Developing and sustaining community partnerships is an explicit part of someone's job (i.e. shared among teachers, department head, administrators, district community liaison)
- Building collaborative, mutually beneficial, and reciprocal relationships with community partners that attend to community needs and assets
- Integrating intentional systems and protocols to generate family feedback and engage all families in decision-making at the school
- Creating opportunities for family and community engagement to shape and strengthen the civic learning experiences in the classroom and with extracurricular activities

RATING (check one)

Exemplary Proficient Emerging Not Evident

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

EXAMPLE FROM DS NETWORK

Uplift Community High School has been designated as a Sustainable Community School. This designation is built on six pillars of school transformation, two of which relate directly to school/community partnerships: authentic parent and community engagement and inclusive school leadership for implementation. Uplift's designated community partner is Kuumba Lynx (KL), a well-known hip hop arts collective that has operated in Uptown (Uplift's community) for over 20 years. KL brings socially conscious arts to youth and engages with communities through conversations around current issues. They also have a deep commitment to restorative practices and building positive relationships. Uplift hopes to transform its school culture and climate to one that is more restorative and respectful of student voices and sees KL as a partner in this work. As part of the initiative, there is a Sustainable Community Schools liaison whose job it is to build bridges between KL and Uplift and recruit and involve parents to work on issues of the school and community. Their Parent Voices Group convenes on issues of concern to parents that are selected by parents - issues including housing, community services, school improvement, and more. Finally, a Community School Leadership Team provides ongoing support and includes representation from students, parents, interested community members, and the business community. The team meets monthly focusing on outreach to ultimately inform and involve the community.



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

WHAT EVIDENCE OR EXAMPLES COME TO MIND?

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR GOALS?

APPENDIX A: Suggested Evidence



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Here are some examples of evidence that you and your team can draw on to complete the self-assessment rubric in order to understand how prevalent these practices are across the school:

- Review and reflect on your Democracy School Student Survey Dashboard and detailed data
- Explore unit maps/curriculum from various courses to see where and how civic learning is embedded
- Facilitate a discussion in various department meetings to ask about ways faculty are integrating civic learning (see Appendix B)
- Explore and reflect on student performance on classroom formative and summative assessments that relate to civic learning
- Review list of school clubs & activities and reflect on the ways in which they support students' identities and civic engagement
- Analyze & reflect on your Democracy Schools student survey, 5Essentials data, school climate data, school discipline data, etc. (if applicable)
- Conduct student focus groups to understand more about their experiences and what kinds of civic learning they would like to see more of
- Discuss students' civic learning experiences and feedback with your student government or student leadership group
- Collect feedback from families at the school via a survey or a discussion at a parent meeting
- Review and reflect on the occurrence of family engagement, school-community and student-led activities and events via the school calendar
- Review and reflect on the school mission statement, school vision, communication materials (newsletter, website, etc.)
- Examples of student media in the school that allow for an open, public forum

APPENDIX B: Suggested Faculty/Department Meeting Discussion Questions



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

In order to gather feedback from various departments and the faculty as a whole, you could use some of the following discussion questions. The ideas and feedback gathered from these meetings can help the DS team to complete the self-assessment tool. You could also provide people with a full copy of the indicators in case they have questions or want more information about each indicator.

Learning Experiences

(NOTE: These questions could be helpful to ask in a faculty meeting, in a student government or student voice committee, or ask department chairs to discuss them in their department meeting.)

Learning Experiences Indicators	What is the school doing well in this area? How widespread and consistent is this in the school?	How could the school improve in this area? What ideas do have for growth?
Design/ Teaching Strategy = Teachers design curriculum and utilize democratic teaching strategies in order to cultivate students' civic knowledge, skills, dispositions, and critical thinking across disciplines and extracurricular activities.		
Foundational Civic Knowledge = Teachers engage students in learning about and developing foundational civic knowledge of democratic concepts as they relate to various disciplines.		

APPENDIX B: continued

Suggested Faculty/Department Meeting Discussion Questions



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Learning Experiences Indicators	What is the school doing well in this area? How widespread and consistent is this in the school?	How could the school improve in this area? What ideas do have for growth?
<p>Discussion of Current and Controversial Issues = Teachers provide opportunities across disciplines for students to take an active role in current and controversial issue discussions and deliberation.</p>		
<p>Simulations = Teachers provide opportunities for students to participate in simulations--including role-playing activities, problem solving, consideration of dilemmas, interactive case studies and scenarios, and online games--that allow students to learn about issues and practice civic skills in multiple disciplines.</p>		
<p>Informed Action/Service-Learning = Teachers provide opportunities for students to engage in civic action by using academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs on a school, local, regional, state or broader level through preparation, action and reflection.</p>		
<p>Extracurricular Activities = School staff lead structured, organized, regular, and long-term extracurricular activities that foster civic learning and engagement and are accessible to, representative of, and attend to the needs and interests of the student body.</p>		

APPENDIX B: continued

Suggested Faculty/Department Meeting Discussion Questions



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Organizational Culture

(NOTE: These questions could be helpful to ask in a faculty meeting, school site council meeting, student government or student voice committee, parent/family meeting, and to ask of community partners.)

Organizational Culture Indicators	What is the school doing well in this area? How widespread and consistent is this in the school?	How could the school improve in this area? What ideas do have for growth?
<p>School Climate = Schools create and maintain a positive and democratic school climate that promotes students' civic development, engagement, and sense of belonging.</p>		
<p>Student Voice = Schools provide formal, informal, and regular opportunities for student voice and student decision-making that is impactful at various levels of the school community.</p>		
<p>Vision & Leadership = School leaders have a clear commitment to the civic mission of the school, dedicate necessary resources to sustain this vision, and ensure all students have equitable access to civic learning.</p>		

APPENDIX B: continued

Suggested Faculty/Department Meeting Discussion Questions



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Organizational Culture Indicators	What is the school doing well in this area? How widespread and consistent is this in the school?	How could the school improve in this area? What ideas do have for growth?
<p>Teacher Hiring, Assessment and Professional Development = School leaders have a commitment to hiring, assessing, and developing staff that can carry out the civic mission of the school as well as attend to equity and teachers' and students' identity and lived experiences.</p>		
<p>School-Community Partnerships = School leaders and staff ensure that the school and its community are a resource for each other and that there are frequent and meaningful interactions with families and community partners.</p>		

APPENDIX C: TEAM REVIEW

Agree on Your School's Ratings



ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Review the final ratings the team has agreed upon and determine a rating by category to get a sense of the overall picture for the school.

** Please submit a separate document that includes a compilation of the notes / evidence that reflects your ratings on each of the elements. **

Categories	Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Not Evident
Learning Experiences				
Design/Teaching Strategy				
Foundational Civic Knowledge				
Discussion of Current & Controversial Issues				
Simulations				
Informed Action/Service Learning				
Extracurricular Activities				
Organizational Culture				
School Climate				
Student Voice				
Vision & Leadership				
Teacher Hiring, Assessment & Professional Development				
School-Community Partnerships				

APPENDIX D: TEAM REFLECTION

Your School's Initial Goals



ROBERT R.
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FOUNDATION

ILLINOIS DEMOCRACY SCHOOLS SELF-ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Now reflect on what you think the school's priorities and next steps should be.

What are 2-3 areas you would like to improve upon or deepen/get better at in the coming year based on your review and reflection and why?

What are some initial ideas of action steps to work toward your goals?

Who else at your school can be involved to help move this forward?

What external supports (i.e. district staff, community partners, local organizations or agencies, DS Network, etc.) might help you achieve your goals?