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RE: Illinois Civics Course Implementation- Regional Trainings Comparative Report
DA: October 17, 2016

Executive Summary

This report provides a detailed comparative analysis from pre- and post-surveys fielded to teachers across Illinois during regional professional development sessions regarding the implementation of a new statewide civics (education) law. The trainings were conducted by McCormick Foundation's Illinois Civics team in collaboration with local civic education PD providers. More than 200 teachers across 9 different PD locations attended these trainings.

Overall, the training sessions had the desired effects, which were to increase teachers' familiarity with the new law and the standards, increase knowledge and confidence about the pedagogical tools that the new law encourages teachers to use in their classrooms, and reinvigorate their belief in the power of civic learning. Importantly, more teachers reported feeling confident about incorporating controversial issues, civil discourse, service learning and simulation after the training. The proportion of teachers who felt confident about incorporating service learning more than doubled, from 34% pre-PD to 75% post-PD. Importantly, far more teachers felt confident that they could now align their new lessons with the Illinois Standards as a result of receiving the training. According to the survey results, the training also enhanced the teachers' ability to advocate for the value of civic learning to a variety of stakeholders, and helped to build regional networks that they can rely on in the future. Continuing to build on this peer- and mentor-centered networks supported by resources and clear communications, appears valuable to the teachers. Peer mentors can work with teachers in their region to concentrate efforts on building local peer networks and resources to specifically help teachers in the most pressing

challenges in their classrooms. Post-PD majority teachers feel comfortable using online platforms for peer learning and this can be an additional avenue to provide quick and effective support to teachers.

The areas and topics teachers would like more support in vary by region. For instance, pre-training, 52% teachers in Carbondale and 60% in Lombard were confident about using simulations and post-training 80% teachers in each region were feeling confident about them. However, around a fifth of the teachers (22%) across the state are still not sure or very confident in using simulations, particularly in Joliet (33%), Bloomington (31%), Macomb (25%), and Charleston (25%). Similarly, there was also a large variation in teacher confidence about reaching out to local leaders and supports for either assistance or resources; all teachers in Lombard were confident about such communication but 44-5% teachers in Lincolnshire and Dixon, and 33-4% in Charleston and Carbondale were not confident of such local support.

The top findings from the analysis are:

- Majority of the teachers (73%), regardless of region, were motivated to attend the trainings for additional resources. Post-surveys show that teachers were very grateful for the wide repertoire of resources shared and particularly that they were modeled during each session. Most teachers across the state also attended the trainings to prepare for the new Illinois Social Studies standards (69%) and better understand the new state legislation (62%)
- Post-PD, teachers placed a higher emphasis on the importance of all pedagogical strategies discussed during the sessions. More than 90% of teachers across all regions rated these as “very important” or “extremely important” after the training. Post-PD 93-4% of the teachers across PD locations also feel really confident in teaching about the 2016 election and integrating civil discourse on controversial issues in their classes. More than 70% teacher feel confident using simulations and incorporating service learning across all regions after the PD, although, a quarter of the teachers (22-25%) are still not confident about simulations or service-learning
- The key takeaway for teachers across the state was a better understanding of the law, the new IL Social Studies standards, and the prescribed instructional strategies. Majority teachers (88%) after the training felt confident that they could make the case for the benefits of civic learning to a wide range of stakeholders
- The challenges most teachers cited were predictable in many ways; these included time and resource constraints and lack of administrative support. A small community or town was seen both as a source of strength and a challenge by teachers

- A number of teachers emphasized the critical importance of peer networks and communication, particularly the connections they made at regional training sessions. However, across the state, 23% teachers are still unsure about such peer networks and 28% are not sure about reaching out to local leaders for assistance or resource identification. This is an area that the local peer mentors can support through their regular interactions with teachers
- Given that post-PD more than 70% of the teacher feel comfortable using online platforms for peer-learning, this could be one source of quick and regular professional development support. There can be webinars, twitter chats, or discussion series around topics teachers find most challenging across the regions

Introduction

The legislation requiring every Illinois high-school student to complete a semester-long civics course has taken effect this fall. The law requires that the civics course is taught through best-practice pedagogical strategies linked to current and controversial issue discussions, service-learning, and simulations of democratic processes. The responsibility for the implementation of the law falls with the Illinois State Board of Education, its Regional Offices of Education and eventually with school districts and high school teachers. The McCormick Foundation has led efforts to provide support for implementation focusing particularly on professional development to teachers across the state. Through regional civic engagement hubs, McCormick is bringing together peer mentor teachers, institutional partners, and civic education partners to create the backbone of the state civic education ecosystem. Peer mentor teachers were recruited in the early part of 2016 and provided a 4-day intensive training in Bloomington-Normal in June, 2016. This training was led by McCormick Foundation's Illinois Civics team including Shawn Healy, Mary Ellen Daneels, and Barb Laimins in conjunction with civic education PD providers such as Facing History and Ourselves, Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago, and Mikva Challenge.

A similar 2-day training model was rolled out for local teachers in nine regional hubs[1] from mid-June to the end of July. Shawn Healy and Mary Ellen Daneels led the foundational training segments for each regional session. Depending on the location, some training modules were conducted by the local peer mentors (2 for each region) and the civic education partners[2]. The trainings were hosted

[1] These regions include: Lombard, Joliet, Carbondale, Edwardsville, Macomb, Charleston, Bloomington-Normal, Lincolnshire, and Dixon. Hillside was another location but was cancelled due to low registration.

[2] Civic Education Partners include: Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago (CRFC); Facing History and Ourselves; Mikva Challenge; Teaching with Primary Sources, Library of Congress <http://www.illinoiscivics.org/partners/partners>

by institutional partners at each location such as local universities (e.g. Eastern Illinois University) or one of the state's Regional Offices of Education[3].

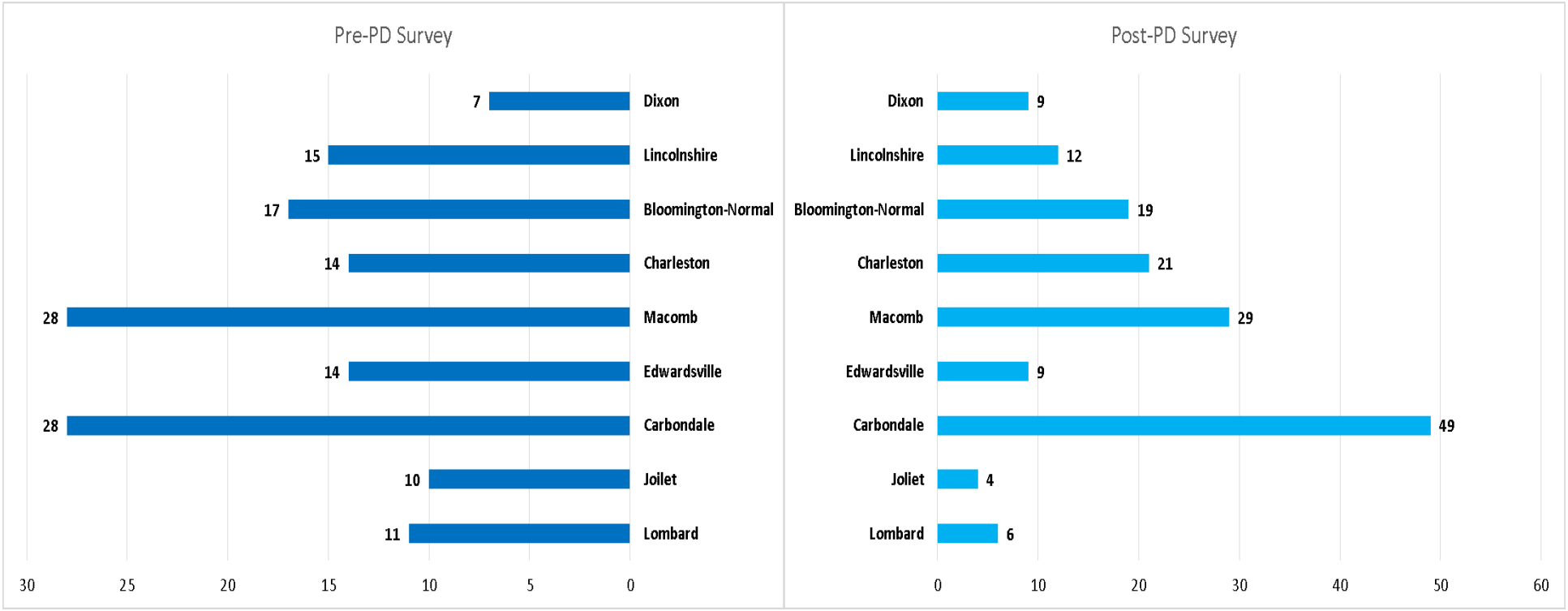
CIRCLE fielded pre- and post-surveys in each regional training location to determine change in teachers' confidence and knowledge of core instructional strategies detailed in the new legislation. The response rate for the surveys differed for each location as shown below (Figure-1). Overall, 237 teachers attended the regional trainings across the state (Table-1). 144 teachers completed the pre-surveys[4] across all regions and 158 teachers completed the post-surveys[5]. The evaluation team was able to match the pre-post surveys from each location to conduct a paired sample t-test with medium effect size for different categories elaborated in the rest of the report[6].

Table-1: Number of Regional Training Attendees[7]

Dixon	**9**
Lincolnshire	**29**
Bloomington-Normal	**19**
Charleston	**29**
Macomb	**32**
Edwardsville	**22**
Carbondale	**55**
Joliet	**19**
Lombard	**23**
Total	***237***

[3] List of Institutional and Financial Partners <http://www.illinoiscivics.org/partners/partners>
[4] 157 teachers took the pre-PD survey; 13 surveys were deleted due to duplication or incompleteness.
[5] 166 teachers took the post-PD survey; 8 surveys had to be deleted due to duplication or incompleteness.
[6] To conduct a paired sample t-test, we needed information about the teacher's name (to assign an ID) and match it to the post-survey. 144 teachers provided names in the pre-survey and 131 provided it for the post-survey. Hence, the numbers for the graphs and teacher responses throughout the report differ from the t-test sample numbers.
[7] Attendance is calculated from the regional trainings registration sheets

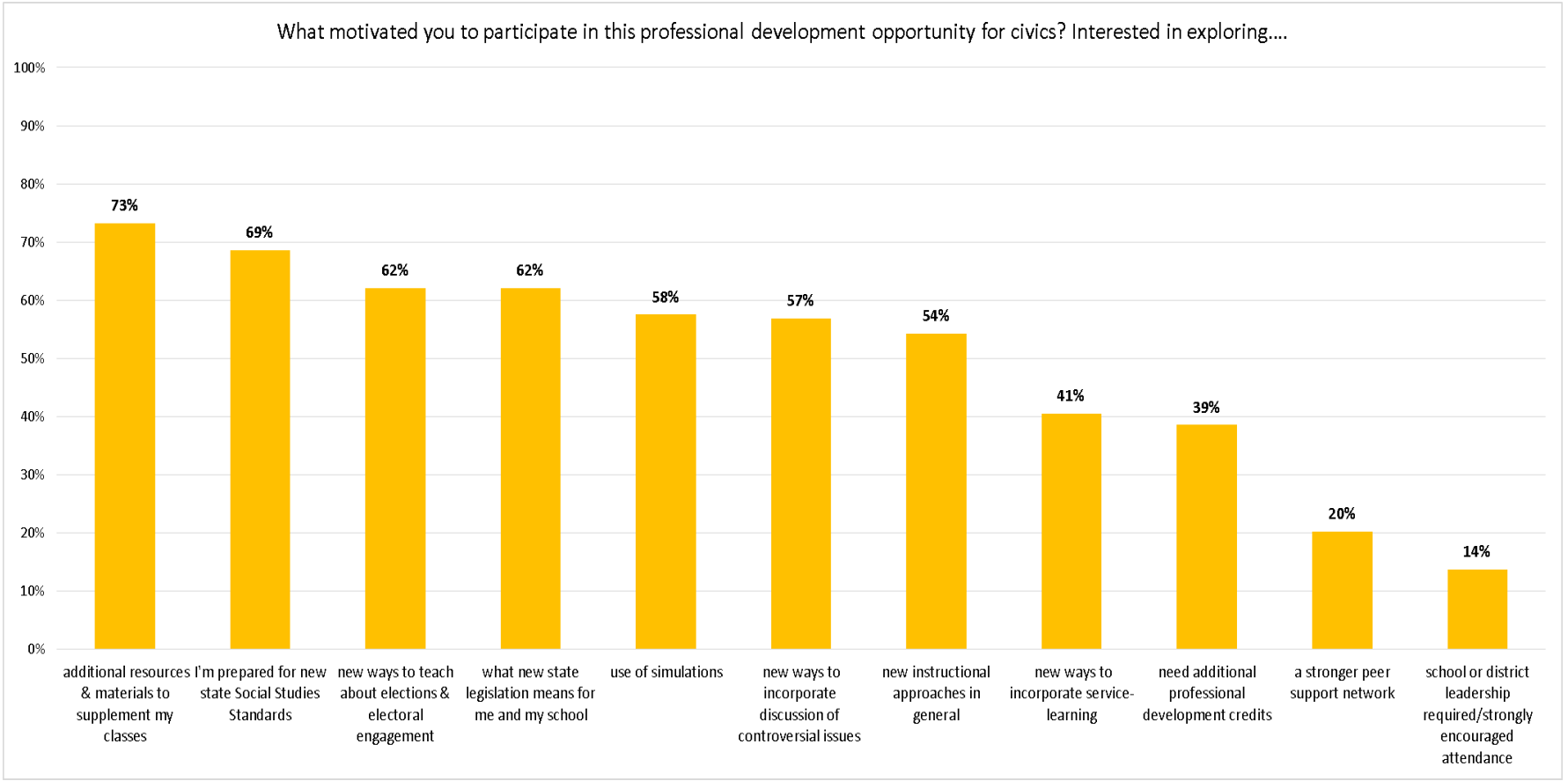
Figure-1: Number of Survey Responses



Teacher Motivation to Attend Training

Most teachers across all regions were initially motivated to attend the regional trainings to better understand the new state legislation (62%), to prepare for the new Social Studies Standards (69%), and particularly to explore additional resources for a variety of instructional strategies (73%). For instance, more than 80% of the teachers in Carbondale, Edwardsville, and Macomb wanted to make they were prepared for the new state social studies standards. A majority of teachers, regardless of region were looking for additional resources, particularly teachers in Joliet (90%), Edwardsville (86%), and Lincolnshire (80%).

Figure-2: Motivations to participate



62% of the teachers across all regions were also interested in learning about new ways of teaching elections and electoral engagement, notably 70-80% of the teachers in Carbondale, Edwardsville, Bloomington, Lincolnshire, and Dixon. In addition, 41% of the teachers were interested in learning innovative ways to incorporate service learning in the curriculum such as in Carbondale (50%) and Joliet (60%). A number of teachers (39%) said an added incentive to participate was professional development credits they could receive, particularly in Charleston (79%) and Dixon (71%). A fifth of teachers (20%) were additionally looking to build a stronger peer support network. 20-30% of the teachers in Carbondale, Macomb, Joliet, and Lincolnshire were hoping to develop a peer network through

their regional training. A small number of teachers (14%) said they were required to or strongly encouraged to attend by their school or district leadership, particularly in Bloomington-Normal (29%) as well as 21% of the teachers in Charleston and Macomb.

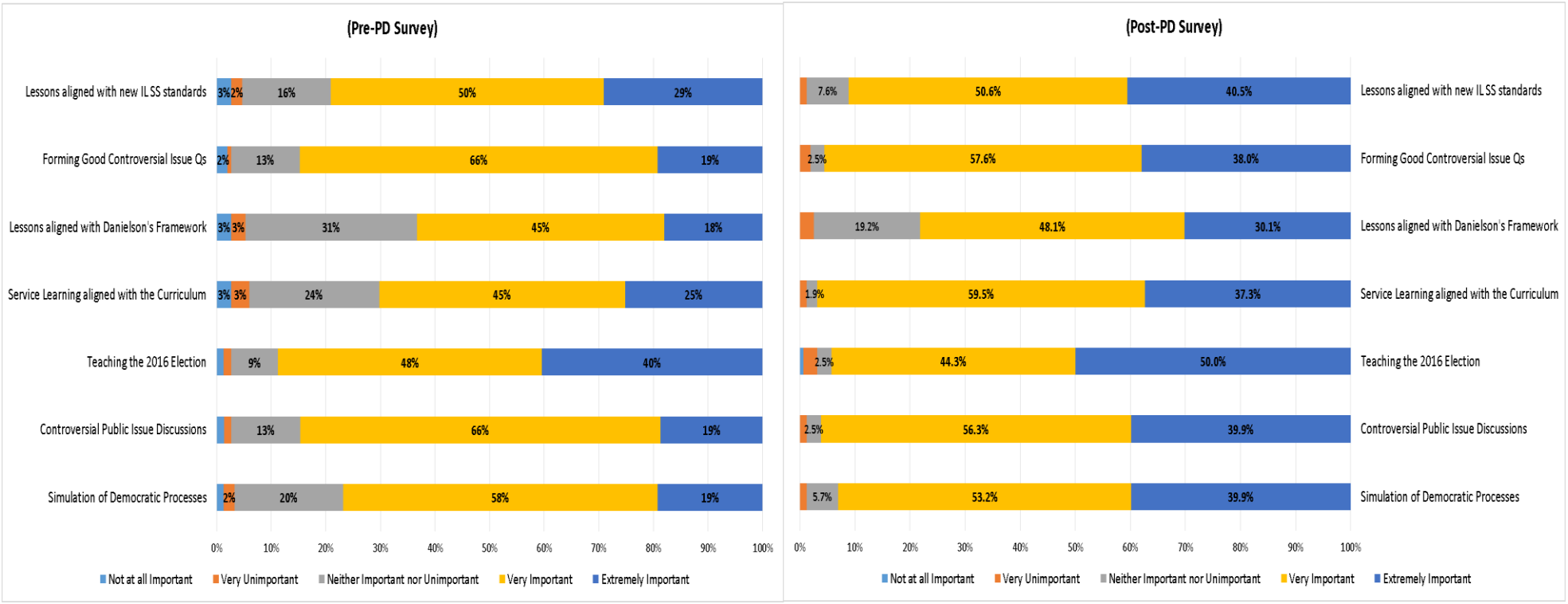
Importance of Teaching Strategies

Around 80% of the teachers across all regions said they currently use discussion of controversial public issues as a teaching strategy in their classroom and 50% incorporated simulations of democratic processes (e.g. mock trials, legislative hearings). Almost half of teachers (49%) also incorporate election-related activities in their classes (e.g. debate watching, creating voter guides) and a third integrated project-based, action-oriented service learning into their teaching.

Before and after the professional development in each region, we asked teachers to rate the importance of aligning lessons to new frameworks and standards (e.g. Danielson, new state social studies standards) and use of best practice instructional strategies (e.g. simulations, service-learning, etc.). Before the training, across all regions, 70% or more teachers rated these strategies as "extremely important" or "very important." The remaining were mostly unsure of how important they felt these strategies to be, particularly about integrating service learning. After the PD sessions, teachers placed an even higher emphasis on all strategies discussed during the sessions. As the graph below shows, more than 90% of teachers across all regions rated these as "very important" or "extremely important" after the training. The only exception being the case of aligning lessons with the Danielson's Framework where 20% teachers, across all regions, were still unsure how important this was. This was particularly true for teachers in Lombard (60%), Charleston (43%), Joliet (33%), and Lincolnshire (27%) where teachers were not sure about the importance of the Danielson's framework post-PD.

This positive attitudinal change is confirmed by the paired-sample t-test conducted for all regions that showed a statistically significant change ($p<0.01$) in each category. The only item without statistical significance was "Teaching the 2016 Election" (see detailed results in the appendix).

Figure-3: How important are the following teaching strategies to you?



Subsequently, there is some variation in the proportion of teachers rating the importance of the pedagogical strategies pre- and post-training. For instance, for the instructional strategy of using simulations of democratic processes; 30% of the Lombard teachers before the PD session thought it was “extremely important” but 60% did so after the training. In Carbondale, on the other hand, 21% teachers pre-PD felt simulations were “extremely important compared to 46% teachers post-PD.

Similarly, 43% of the teachers in Dixon rated incorporating controversial public issue discussion as “very important” or “extremely important” pre-PD and 100% rated it as such after the sessions. Compared to 86% of the teachers in Charleston who already rated controversial issue discussions as a “very important” or “extremely important” teaching strategy before the training and all of them rated it as such post-PD.

For including and aligning service learning with the curriculum, around 71% teachers in Macomb and 79% in Carbondale thought it was very or extremely important and all of them (100%) rated it as such after their respective PD sessions. In Charleston, however, none of the teachers thought service learning was “extremely important” before the training and 19% thought so afterwards.

This pattern of cross-regional increased sense of importance for pedagogical strategies did not hold for teacher attitudes related to teaching the 2016 election. For instance, prior to PD, 26% of the teachers in Lincolnshire rated teaching the 2016 election as “extremely important” in their classrooms and 64% of them rated it the same afterwards. However in Edwardsville, even though the overall proportion of teachers who thought the teaching the current election was “very” or “extremely important” increased from 92% to a 100% after the training; the proportion of teachers who thought it was “extremely important” fell from 64% before the PD to 33% afterwards.

Similarly, on aligning lessons with new and existing standards, there was some variation between locations. For aligning lessons with the Danielson’s framework, there was a 17 percentage point increase in teachers from Bloomington-Normal who thought it was “very important” or “extremely” important to their teaching. However, in Charleston, there was a 7 percentage point drop in teachers rating the Danielson’s framework as important and 43% of the teachers there were still unsure of its importance after the training sessions.

On the other hand, there was a sizeable change in teachers rating the importance of aligning their lessons with the new Illinois Social Studies standards across almost all regions, most notably with a 32 percentage point and 48 percentage point increase in Dixon and Charleston, respectively.

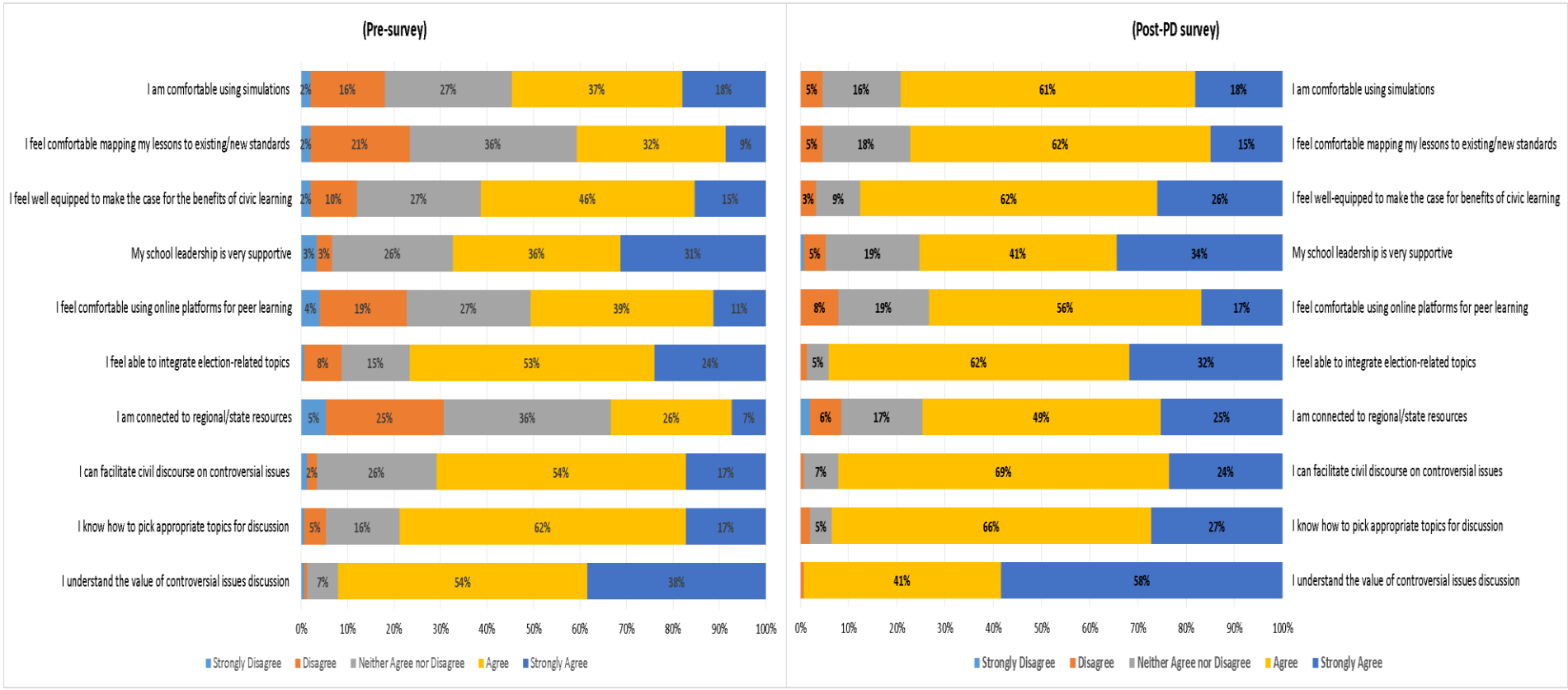
Teacher understanding and comfort level

Teachers were asked to respond to their comfort level and understanding regarding state and local resources available to them, as well as the value of the instructional strategies modeled during the training sessions (Figure-4). One significant change in teachers’ attitude post-PD, regardless of regional location, was that they felt they had more knowledge and information to connect to local and state resources that support civic instruction. There was a 41 percentage point increase for those who ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with this statement. In the post-surveys from Edwardsville for instance, 86% teachers felt more connected to regional or state resources compared to 14% before. The majority of the teachers (88%) across all the regions also felt more equipped to make the case for civic learning and its benefits to a wide range of community stakeholders after the trainings. This is compared to 61% before the PD sessions. For example, in Joliet, 30% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they could make the case for civic learning before

the training and 50% teachers were unsure; post-PD all of the teachers (100%) in the survey agreed that were equipped to argue for its benefits.

Across the regional trainings, teachers felt much more comfortable after the PD mapping their lessons to new and existing frameworks such as the new state social studies standards with a 36 percentage point jump from before. In Bloomington-Normal, 83% of the teachers 'agreed' they could map their lessons with such standards compared to 53% before the training. Overall, teachers also felt more at ease using online platforms for peer learning (from 50% to 73%). For example in Charleston, 74% of the teachers felt they could use online platforms after the training compared to 43% of the teachers before.

Figure-4: How much do you agree or disagree with the statements?



Generally across regions, teachers felt more comfortable using instructional strategies such as integrating civil discourse on controversial issues (from 71% to 93%) and using simulations in the classroom (from 55% to 79%). For instance, in Dixon 57% teachers 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they understood the value of controversial issue discussions in the classroom before the training and all the teachers (100%) felt as such afterwards. In Joliet, pre-PD 40% teachers 'agreed' they knew how to pick an appropriate topic for discussion and all of them felt they could do so afterwards. Similarly, 89% of the teachers in Carbondale who filled the post-survey felt they could facilitate controversial issues discussions in the class compared to 75% who took the pre-survey.

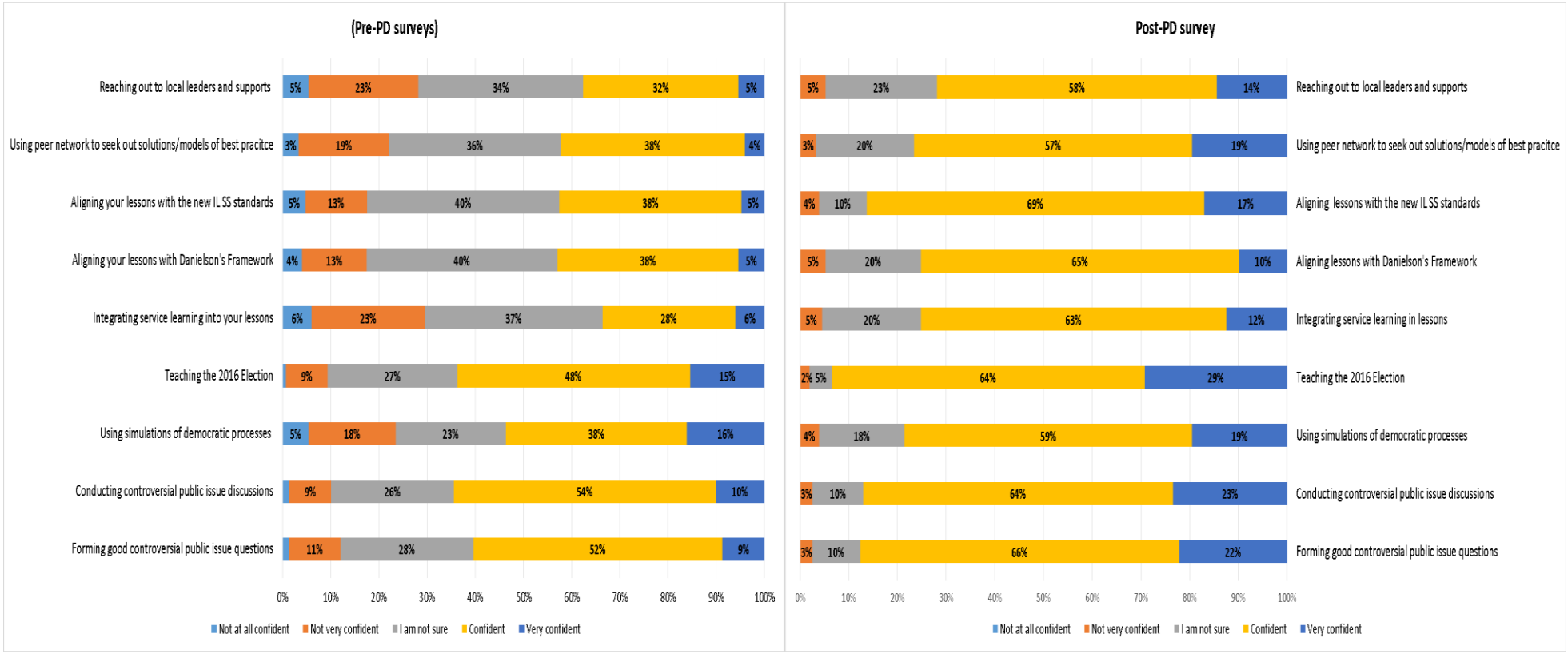
This trend across the regions in teacher's increased comfort and understanding of the resources and instructional strategies available to them is confirmed by a paired-sample t-test across these categories. The results are statistically significant ($p<0.05$) across all categories listed. The only exception is the statement of "my school leadership is very supportive of my professional development in teaching civics."

Teacher Confidence

Teachers across all regions had a considerable gain in their confidence in using best-practice pedagogical strategies, aligning their lessons to new state Social Studies standards, and seeking out local and state resources. The paired sample t-test showed statistically significant ($p<0.01$) results in each category listed below in Figure-5.

The post-PD surveys, across all regions, show teachers generally felt much more confident about using the teaching methodologies prescribed in the new state law, particularly integrating service learning into their lessons. Overall post-training, 75% of the teachers felt "confident" or "very confident" incorporating service learning across all regions; a 41 percentage point increase from their confidence level before the training. However, a quarter of the teachers (25%) across the state are still not sure or confident about integrating service learning in the classrooms. For instance pre-PD in Joliet, only 40% of the teachers were feeling "confident" or "very confident" about integrating service-learning in their lessons but after the 2-day training they were all (100%) feeling confident. However, in other regions a sizeable portion of the teachers were not very confident about it such as Lincolnshire (36%), Charleston (33%), Bloomington-Normal (25%), and Macomb (22%).

Figure-5: How confident are you in doing the following in relation to your classroom teaching?



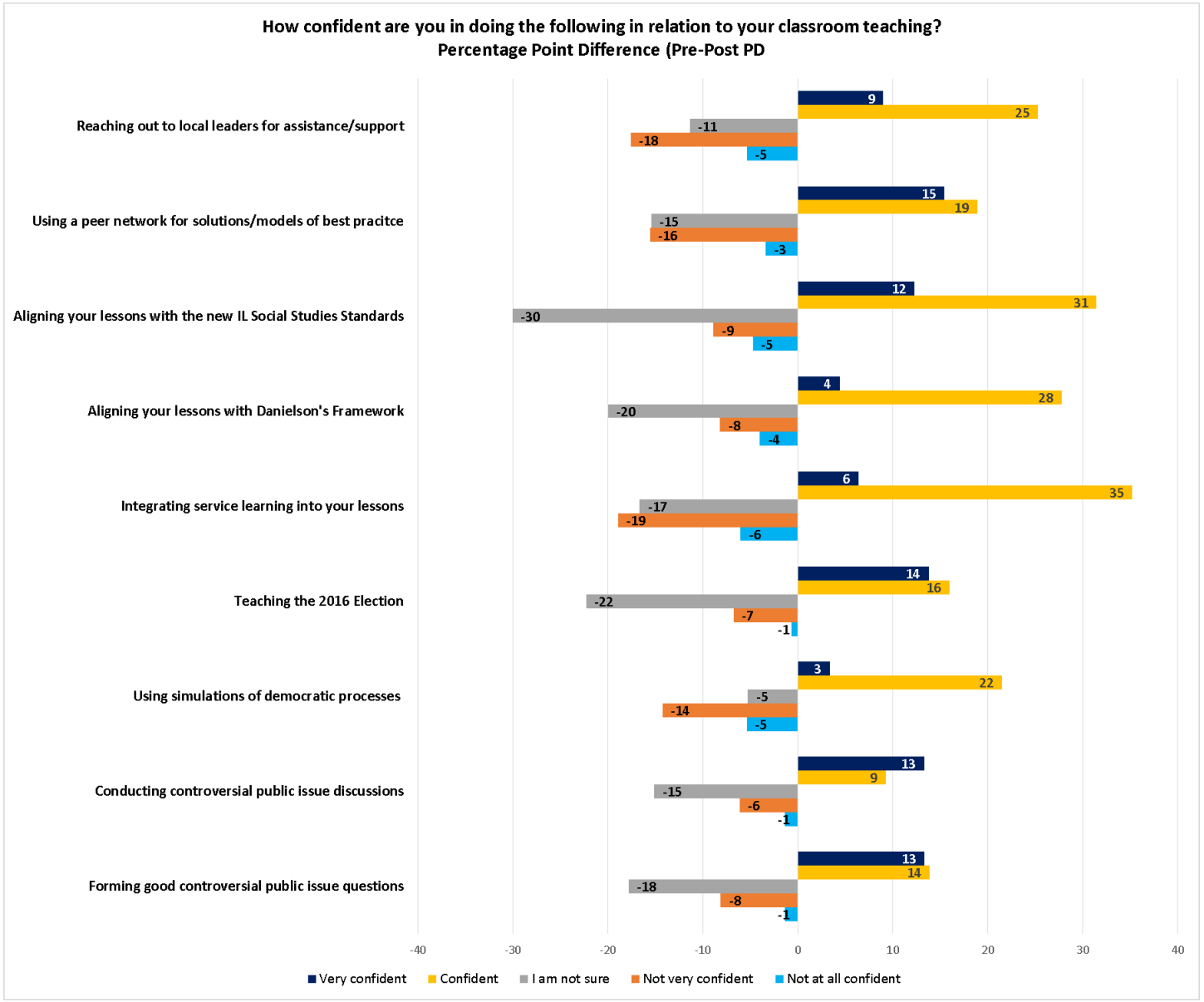
94% of the teachers across PD locations also feel very confident in teaching about the 2016 election after the training, with 30-percentage point increase from before the trainings. For instance in Carbondale pre-PD, 70% of the teachers felt confident about teaching the 2016 election and 92% felt such after the training. In addition, most teachers (87%) after the trainings feel confident in conducting controversial public issue discussions and forming good questions for it. All the teachers in Joliet and Dixon, for example, felt confident about both forming questions and conducting such discussions after their respective trainings. However, 13% of the teachers across all regions are not so confident about incorporating controversial issue discussion in the classroom with about 20% of teachers in Lombard, Carbondale, Bloomington and Lincolnshire still unsure about conducting such discussions.

After the regional trainings, there was a 25-percentage point increase (from 54% to 79%) in teachers' confidence in using simulations to show democratic processes in the classroom. For instance, pre-training, 52% teachers in Carbondale and 60% in Lombard were confident about using simulations and post-training 80% teachers in each region were feeling confident about them. Around a fifth of the teachers (22%) across the state are still not sure or very confident in using simulations, particularly in Joliet (33%), Bloomington (31%), Macomb (25%), and Charleston (25%). Figure-6 below shows the percentage point difference in teacher confidence levels before and after the training. For example, post-PD across the state, there was an increase of 25 percentage-points and 9 percentage-points in teachers feeling "confident" and "very confident" respectively about reaching out to local leaders and supports for assistance with teaching challenges.

The largest difference (43 points) in teachers' confidence post-PD sessions was in aligning their lessons with the new IL Social Studies standards. 86% of the teachers feel "confident" or "very confident" about incorporating the new state standards after the trainings. This is compared to 43% who answered similarly before the training. The PD sessions across the regions effectively demonstrated what the new law is and how teachers can align their lessons with the new social studies standards and the Danielson's framework. For example, all the teachers in Joliet and Bloomington and more than 85% in Macomb, Charleston and Dixon feel confident about the new state standards and their lessons.

Overall, more than 70% teachers have also received ideas on how to use local networks and resources to seek out solutions to teaching challenges as well as reach out to local leaders for support. Across the state, 23% teachers are unsure about such peer networks and 28% are not sure about reaching out to local leaders for assistance or resource identification. For instance, all the teachers in Lombard and Joliet trainings sessions felt confident about using peer networks; however around 30% teachers in Carbondale and Dixon were not sure of them post-training. There was also a large variation in teacher confidence about reaching out to local leaders and supports for either assistance or resources; all teachers in Lombard were confident about such communication but 44-5% teachers in Lincolnshire and Dixon, and 33-34% in Charleston and Carbondale for not confident of such local support.

Figure-6: Percentage Point Difference in Pre- and Post- PD Teacher Confidence

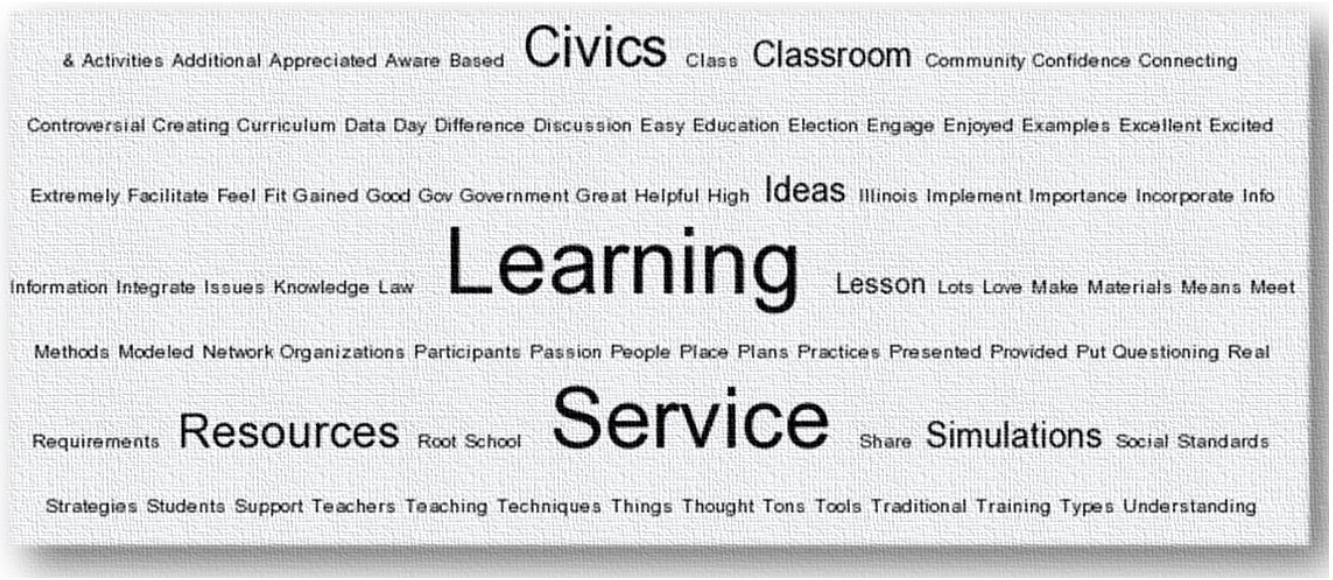


Key takeaways

Before the trainings, teachers were asked what they hoped to take back to their classrooms from this opportunity. Most teachers were looking to get a "better understanding of new laws and tips/strategies for integrating them into (my) classroom." Many teachers were also hoping for "useable resources" and "better connections, better ideas" to incorporate instructional strategies such as service learning or simulations in their class.

In the post-surveys, regardless of regional location, the training surpassed teachers' expectations. As one teacher said, "It was awesome! For the first time in 21 years of teaching, I feel supported and have a network of people to rely and go to for assistance! Moreover, democracy is a verb and I am EXCITED about teaching my classes in a totally different way!"

Post-PD Teachers' Key Takeaways



The majority teachers also mentioned a better understanding of the "new Civics law" and the new state requirements and standards, particularly around implementing service learning. Most teachers really appreciated the amount of resources shared and particularly that they were modeled during the sessions. A teacher mentioned that for him/her the greatest benefit was that "[m]ultiple, free

resources are available for teacher(s) to use in the classroom [and] presenters modeled the resources." Besides resources and knowledge, many teachers also stated that they felt more confident in trying different strategies; one teacher said, "having more confidence to teach about controversial issues" and another said, "[h]ow easy it actually is to integrate service learning…" Many teachers really liked the Question Formulation Technique and other teachers came away with "many, many ideas!!!"

In the post-PD surveys, teachers were also asked the one new action they were thinking about as a result of their participation in the training. Most teachers answered with pedagogical strategies introduced in the sessions particularly simulations, service learning ideas, QFT, Root Causes, and the four corners debate. As one teacher remarked, "service learning in my classes is not as frightening as it once was" and another said s/he will be using, "QFTs to introduce new units." Many teachers also mentioned the "soapbox challenge" they were thinking of using and others echoed a teacher's remarks, "can't wait to hit the controversial topics." An added takeaway for a number of teachers was communicating and collaborating with other teachers in their school and leaders in their community. One teacher said his/her key takeaway was "involving more local community leaders…" and another said it was "inspiring co-workers on benefits of civic learning."

Strengths

Post-PD teachers were asked to relate three strengths they could see in their region when thinking about implementing the new civics law and the idea of "Civics is Back." The most common response from teachers was the various kinds of support they had from their school administration, local "close-knit" community, state/local officials, local institutional partners (such as EIU, WIU, Paul Simon Institute), and great resources from the Illinois Civics team and local networks. As one teacher listed the strengths in his/her region, "1.Community Support 2. Local officials-easy to access them 3. Administration support."

Most teachers stated that a small town/city meant a close community "where students can actually meet/know politicians" and "the ability for [my] students to engage with the government of the township." Other teachers noted the network of teachers they formed locally through this training as well as the "ample resources" they have now. Teachers also mentioned "community of educators to network with" and "democracy schools in my region" as a source of strength in implementing the new civics law and state standards.

Many teachers also mentioned that one strength they saw in implementation was that their school was "doing many of the things we need to be doing." In addition, many teachers noted an "energized student base" willing to try "something new," student awareness of issues particularly through social media and their "desire to expand their influence." Teachers also saw many opportunities for

students to develop civic skills and “develop citizenship” through “student involvement in government practices both within and outside class.” A couple of teachers mentioned family support for such an initiative as a teacher said the three strengths in his/her region were, “engaged students, supportive parents, civic pride.” A handful teachers also mentioned “diversity of students in region” and “diversity in thought” as a source of strength in their region.

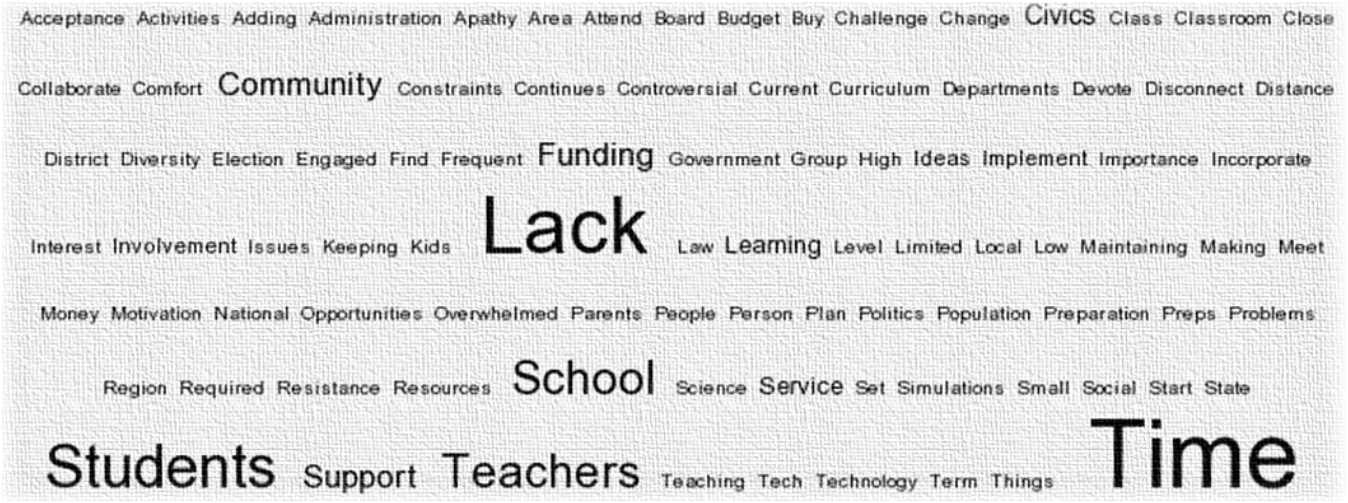
Regional Strengths Teachers noted after Training

Bottlenecks and Challenges

The most common challenge, expectedly, cited by teachers was time and resource constraints. The lack of time was both in planning and prepping for implementation of a civics course to meet all requirements as well as lack of class time to cover all essential material. As one teacher aptly said, “I do not see any barriers that will restrict me other than the normal barrier that impacts all teachers – time.” The resource constraints were class sizes that were too small or too large. Technology was also a challenge in many schools.

The other oft-cited challenge by teachers was low student interest and engagement in class and lack of administrative support. These areas seem to be a source of strength for teachers in some schools and a major bottleneck for teachers in other regional schools. Teachers said the major challenges in the classroom were "getting students to be open-minded," "motivating students to participate," "students do not value civics" and "making students realize that they are very important in the democratic process." Teachers also realized that many students had difficulty "seeing relevance of government in their lives." The other difficulty teachers face is "building buy-in across staff," "resistance from teachers," and "reluctance from school board."

Regional Challenges Teachers noted after Training



A similar paradox is also apparent in community support where many teachers believed a small community provided strong local connections for learning and citizenship, however many teachers also believe it's a major challenge as such communities can be resistant to change and parochial. As one teacher said about challenges in his/her region, "close[d] mindsets of small town communities…overcoming the political climate in the state that could discourage young peoples [sic] view of importance."

Teachers also cited external factors that were challenges such as lack of funding, classroom size, and high-risk students from underprivileged backgrounds. However, they felt that they could not control these. One teacher remarked, "Our district is going through major cutbacks. Class sizes will be larger and the demands will be greater. I will be expected to do more with less." Another

teacher's said the biggest challenge was "high poverty/low achievement compared with state averages. Students unused to many of the elements of the new requirement."

One teacher also mentioned the lack of diversity as a challenge toward implementing civics and civic skills, "having a very homogenous student population means that there are a limited set of viewpoints which get expressed in the classroom. This makes discussion more challenging because there is less opportunity for students to engage with different perspectives."

Additional Support

Post-training teachers were asked to share any additional supports or resources they think they will need for successful implementation of the new civics law and requirements in their region. Most teachers said they didn't need any more resources or were "not sure yet" what they would require in the coming months. As one teacher said, "none, we were provided with a lot of great resources" and another said, "I feel I have plenty for now to comb through and utilize." Many teachers also predictably mentioned "more lesson plans," "more training is always good" and "continued education/communication" as additional support.

Teachers also wanted additional avenues for peer collaboration and networking opportunities; "more connections with other area teachers" and "continued contact with other professionals". They were happy to have regional mentors they could regularly contact. A teacher shared, "I like having a teacher mentor that I can call on…is a big help" and another teacher similarly added, "[a]ccess to the mentors which they are more than willing to give." Teachers also requested more time to "process all of the information" and develop an aligned curriculum and asked for different types of assistance such as "step-by-step alignment with Danielson" and "supports on sequencing all of this cool stuff!"

In addition, teachers pointed out that they would need "assessment strategies" and "easy to use rubrics for assessing student learning." Lastly, many teachers added that they would need help in getting their staff on board as well as "coordinated support from (the) district/building staff" for successful implementation.

Conclusion

The survey results show that though there is variation between regions across the state, every region showed a positive change in teacher comfort level and understanding of the law as well as the confidence to implement the prescribed pedagogical strategies aligned with state standards.

The surveys show that many teachers across the state were already using the pedagogical strategies including discussions of controversial issues (80%), simulations of democratic process (50%), and election-related activities (49%). A third of the teachers (33%) were integrating some project-based, action oriented service learning in their classes. Post-PD one of the largest changes, regardless of regional training locations, was the higher emphasis and importance teachers placed on all of these strategies. The post-PD surveys, across all regions, show teachers generally felt much more confident about using the teaching methodologies prescribed in the new state law, particularly integrating service learning into their lessons. Overall post-training, 75% of the teachers felt "confident" or "very confident" incorporating service learning across all regions; a 41 percentage point increase from their confidence level before the training. However, a quarter of the teachers (25%) across the state are still not sure or confident about it.

Generally across regions, teachers also felt more comfortable using instructional strategies such as integrating civil discourse on controversial issues (from 71% to 93%) and using simulations in the classroom (from 55% to 79%). Although, a fifth of the teachers (22%) are not confident about simulations and 13% are not sure about integrating controversial issue discussions in the classroom. 94% of the teachers across PD locations also feel really confident in teaching about the 2016 election after the training, with 30 percentage point increase from before the trainings.

Besides illustrating best-practice instructional strategies, the PD sessions have done a great job in explaining the new state Social Studies standards and how teachers can align their lessons and teaching practice with it. The largest difference (43 points) in teachers' confidence post-PD sessions was in aligning their lessons with the new Illinois Social Studies standards. 86% of the teachers feel "confident" or "very confident" about incorporating the new state standards after the trainings from 43% before them.

Many teachers after the training (88%) felt confident that they could make the case for the benefits of civic learning to a wide range of stakeholders Overall, teachers also felt more at ease using online platforms for peer learning (from 50% to 73%). This could be an avenue for continued support and communication for teachers in every region.

One significant change in teachers' attitude post-PD, regardless of regional locations, was that they felt they had more knowledge and information to connect to local and state resources that support civic instruction. There was a 41 percentage point increase post-PD for those who "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with this statement. Overall, more than 70% teachers also received ideas on how to use local peer networks and resources to seek out solutions to teaching challenges and reach out to local leaders for support. 23% teachers are unsure about such peer networks and 28% are not sure about reaching out to local leaders for assistance or resource identification.

The key takeaway for teachers across the state was a better understanding of the law and the prescribed instructional strategies as well as the availability of support and resources for them. Teachers really appreciated that each pedagogical strategy was explained and modeled in the sessions. They would like more assessment strategies for assessing student learning in these domains. Teachers valued the network of local teachers and peer mentors as a major strength to help in implementation. Teachers also were heartened to find that implementation of the new law and standards wasn't as difficult as they had imagined partly because they realized they were doing many of these in their schools already and now they had access to ample resources for additional components.

The challenges most teachers cited were predictable in many ways; these included time and resource constraints and lack of administrative support. A small community or town was seen both as a source of strength and a challenge by teachers. Many teachers thought a small-town meant a close-knit community where students could know their local officials and have many opportunities for local civic engagement. However, many teachers also thought small communities were too homogenous and parochial at times which can lead to a closed political climate especially for young people and a lack of diversity in thought and perspectives. This also led to an additional challenge where teachers thought students were unmotivated because they did not value civic learning or linked its relevance to their lives in general. For additional support, most teachers would like a continuation of such professional development opportunities and avenues for communication and networking with other teachers and PD providers.

Recommendations

Based on the survey results and analysis, some general recommendations are provided below.

- A number of teachers emphasized the critical importance of peer networks and communication, particularly the connections they made at regional training sessions. However, across the state, 23% teachers are still unsure about using peer networks and 28% are not confident about reaching out to local leaders for assistance or resource identification. This is an area that the local peer mentors can support through their regular interaction with teachers. One suggestion is that peer mentors can be

provided resources and tips on how to develop stronger local networks and connect teachers to available resources or leaders that can help them

- Another suggestion is that teachers can be provided in-person platforms to discuss specific topics and strategies on a regular basis, and these platforms can be rotated in every region
- Many teachers would like continued professional development and support. A number of teaches noted that they valued the ample resources provided to them but some were “slightly overwhelmed.” Given that post-PD more than 70% of the teacher feel comfortable using online platforms for peer-learning, this could be one source of quick and regular professional development support. There can be webinars, twitter chats, or discussion series around topics teachers find most challenging in their classes
- One example is that many teachers struggled with time constraints and low student interest and engagement in civics. A webinar could address this with specific strategies and tips including bringing in other teachers and their methods as models of best practice
- Similarly, there are areas such as student enthusiasm and diversity, and the local “small” community context that are sources of strength for some regional teachers but were cited as challenges by other teachers across the state. An online peer learning exchange can help generate ideas and strategies between teachers. For instance, the Illinois Civics team or the peer mentors could ask for proposals from local teachers on which topics they could provide expertise and organize peer learning exchanges around that topic
- The regional trainings provided an impressive overview of the new legislation, the mandated pedagogical strategies, and the wide repertoire of available resources. Nevertheless, teachers in every region require additional support in different domains such as service-learning or making the case for civics in their school/community. In the first year of implementation, the Illinois Civics team can work with the local peer mentors and institutional partners to map out a plan to provide surgical support on the most challenging topic in a given region

Appendix

Table-1

Paired Samples Statistics							
How important are the following teaching strategies to you?		**Mean**	**N**	**Difference in Means (T1-T2)**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Pair 1	IMP_Simulation of Democratic Processes (e.g. mock trials, debates) (T1)	4.03	77	-.364	-4.110	76	**.000**
	IMP_Simulation of Democratic Processes (e.g. mock trials, debates) (T2)	4.39	77				
Pair 2	IMP_Controversial Public Issue Discussions (T1)	4.06	77	-.260	-3.702	76	**.000**
	IMP_Controversial Public Issue Discussions (T2)	4.32	77				
Pair 3	IMP_Teaching the 2016 Election (T1)	4.34	77	-.065	-.844	76	**.402**
	IMP_Teaching the 2016 Election (T2)	4.40	77				
Pair 4	IMP_Service Learning aligned with the Curriculum (T1)	3.88	77	-.416	-3.952	76	**.000**
	IMP_Service Learning aligned with the Curriculum (T2)	4.30	77				
Pair 5	IMP_Lessons aligned with Danielson's Framework (T1)	3.76	76	-.289	-3.472	75	**.001**
	IMP_Lessons aligned with Danielson's Framework (T2)	4.05	76				

Pair 6	IMP_Forming Good Controversial Public Issue Questions (T1)	4.06	77	-.234	-3.276	76	**.002**
	IMP_Forming Good Controversial Public Issue Questions (T2)	4.30	77				
Pair 7	IMP_Lessons aligned with new Illinois Social Studies Standards (T1)	4.05	76	-.263	-3.278	75	**.002**
	IMP_Lessons aligned with new Illinois Social Studies Standards (T2)	4.32	76				

Table-2

Paired Samples Statistics							
How much do you agree or disagree with the statements?		**Mean**	**N**	**Difference in Means (T1-T2)**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Pair 1	AGREE_I understand the value of controversial issues discussion in my classroom(s) (T1)	4.28	75	-.267	-3.710	74	**.000**
	AGREE_I understand the value of controversial issues discussion in my classroom(s) (T2)	4.55	75				
Pair 2	AGREE_I know how to pick appropriate topics for discussion in my classroom(s) (T1)	3.91	75	-.173	-2.408	74	**.019**
	AGREE_I know how to pick appropriate topics for discussion in my classroom(s) (T2)	4.08	75				
Pair 3	AGREE_I can facilitate civil discourse on controversial issues in my classroom(s) (T1)	3.89	74	-.216	-2.704	73	**.009**

	AGREE_I can facilitate civil discourse on controversial issues in my classroom(s) (T2)	4.11	74				
Pair 4	AGREE_I am connected to regional or state resources that support civics instruction (T1)	3.05	74	-.892	-7.563	73	**.000**
	AGREE_I am connected to regional or state resources that support civics instruction (T2)	3.95	74				
Pair 5	AGREE_I feel able to integrate election-related topics (e.g. voting, voter registration, early voting, election judging, campaigning) into my classroom(s) (T1)	3.91	74	-.324	-3.022	73	**.003**
	AGREE_I feel able to integrate election-related topics (e.g. voting, voter registration, early voting, election judging, campaigning) into my classroom(s) (T2)	4.23	74				
Pair 6	AGREE_I feel comfortable using online platforms for peer learning (T1)	3.35	74	-.500	-4.648	73	**.000**
	AGREE_I feel comfortable using online platforms for peer learning (T2)	3.85	74				
Pair 7	AGREE_My school leadership is very supportive of my professional development in teaching civics (T1)	3.85	74	-.095	-1.153	73	**.253**
	AGREE_My school leadership is very supportive of my professional development in teaching civics (T2)	3.95	74				
Pair 8	AGREE_-I feel well equipped to make the case for the benefits of civic learning to a wide range of stakeholders community (T1)	3.64	74	-.554	-4.928	73	**.000**

	AGREE_I feel well equipped to make the case for the benefits of civic learning to a wide range of stakeholders community (T2)	4.19	74				
Pair 9	AGREE_I feel comfortable mapping my lessons to existing and new curricular frameworks and standards (e.g. Danielson, IL Social Studies Standards) (T1)	3.27	74	-.595	-5.848	73	**.000**
	AGREE_I feel comfortable mapping my lessons to existing and new curricular frameworks and standards (e.g. Danielson, IL Social Studies Standards) (T2)	3.86	74				
Pair 10	AGREE_I am comfortable using simulations (e.g. mock trials, debates) in my class (T1)	3.46	74	-.446	-4.153	73	**.000**
	AGREE_I am comfortable using simulations (e.g. mock trials, debates) in my class (T2)	3.91	74				

Table-3

Paired Samples Statistics							
How confident are you in doing the following in relation to your classroom teaching?		**Mean**	**N**	**Difference in Means (T1-T2)**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Pair 1	CONFIDENT_Forming good controversial public issue questions (T1)	3.51	73	-.603	-5.975	72	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Forming good controversial public issue questions (T2)	4.11	73				

Pair 2	CONFIDENT_Conducting controversial public issue discussions (T1)	3.67	73	-.438	-5.299	72	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Conducting controversial public issue discussions (T2)	4.11	73				
Pair 3	CONFIDENT_Using simulations of democratic processes (e.g. mock trials, debates) (T1)	3.37	73	-.644	-5.989	72	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Using simulations of democratic processes (e.g. mock trials, debates) (T2)	4.01	73				
Pair 4	CONFIDENT_Teaching the 2016 Election (T1)	3.68	73	-.548	-6.805	72	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Teaching the 2016 Election (T2)	4.23	73				
Pair 5	CONFIDENT_Integrating service learning into your lessons (T1)	3.01	72	-.847	-7.276	71	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Integrating service learning into your lessons (T2)	3.86	72				
Pair 6	CONFIDENT_Aligning your lessons with Danielson's Framework (T1)	3.30	73	-.521	-6.271	72	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Aligning your lessons with Danielson's Framework (T2)	3.82	73				

Pair 7	CONFIDENT_Aligning your lessons with the new Illinois Social Studies Standards (T1)	3.22	73	-.781	-7.668	72	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Aligning your lessons with the new Illinois Social Studies Standards (T2)	4.00	73				
Pair 8	CONFIDENT_Using a peer network to seek out solutions to teaching challenges or to find models of best pracitce (T1)	3.15	73	-.849	-7.001	72	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Using a peer network to seek out solutions to teaching challenges or to find models of best pracitce (T2)	4.00	73				
Pair 9	CONFIDENT_Reaching out to local leaders and supports for assistance with teaching challenges and resource identiifcation (T1)	3.19	72	-.653	-5.566	71	**.000**
	CONFIDENT_Reaching out to local leaders and supports for assistance with teaching challenges and resource identiifcation (T2)	3.85	72				