



Quick Reference Guide: District Level Graduating Ready to Contribute to Civic Life in a Global Community

Develop Clear Plans to Address Inequities in Access to Civic Opportunities

District teams have clear plans to address inequities in the inclusion of ELs in civic opportunities.

District leaders ensure English Learners (ELs) are included in civic engagement opportunities. This may require developing a shared definition of civic engagement that incorporates perspectives from key stakeholders such as students, parents, community members, and district educators and leaders. Because ELs’ home cultures may define civic responsibility differently from American districts and schools, this conversation requires great cultural sensitivity. It will also require incorporating global and civic perspectives of ELs and their families to develop a deeper understanding of civic engagement. Once there is a shared definition, district leaders can set clear expectations about EL involvement in civic opportunities, communicate expectations through [district plans](#), and develop mechanisms for ensuring ELs have access to participate in them successfully. In practice this may mean identifying and aligning curriculum and [instructional practices](#) to develop key knowledge, skills and disposition ELs will need to successfully participate in their community as active citizens. These practices

A Vision for Civic Engagement

“All Massachusetts students will be educated in the histories of the Commonwealth, the United States, and the world. They will be prepared to make informed civic choices and assume their responsibility for strengthening equality, justice, and liberty in and beyond the United States.”

[Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for History and Social Science, p.8](#)

should be culturally responsive and focus on developing ELs’ language proficiency alongside civic competencies. District leaders that promote EL participation in civic opportunities also ensure educators and school leaders are well-prepared to support ELs in these contexts. They provide professional learning for educators and school leaders on how to support ELs in this area and identifying curricular resources for supporting innovative civic engagement [projects](#). In addition, district leaders develop mechanisms for tracking EL participation and success in civic opportunities to evaluate effectiveness of current strategies and adjust plans when inequities in EL participation or success are identified.

Support Educators to Ensure Opportunities for ELs Civic Engagement

Civic Readiness

Content	Civic knowledge and the ability to apply it in different circumstances and settings.
Intellectual Skills	ability to identify, assess, interpret, describe, analyze and explain matters of concern in civic life
Participatory Skills	knowing how to work collaboratively in groups and organizational settings, interface with elected officials and community representatives, communicate perspectives and arguments, and plan strategically for civic change
Dispositions	interpersonal and intrapersonal values, virtues and behaviors respect for freedom of speech and thought, respect for others, commitment to equality, capacity for listening, capacity to communicate in ways accessible to others

[Massachusetts Definition of College and Career Readiness and Civic Preparation, p. 3](#)

The district supports educators to ensure multiple opportunities for ELs to contribute to civic life in a global community.

ELs are a varied group with different experiences and backgrounds. Because of their bilingual and bicultural backgrounds, ELs have experiences in navigating multiple cultures and can bring these assets to their civic engagement in an increasingly diverse world. Supporting EL success involves providing multiple opportunities for ELs to use these assets to develop their own competencies and contribute to civic life and to the larger learning community. District leaders can support EL contribution to civic life by developing

and funding programs and activities that focus on civic engagement. This may include supporting curriculum development for ELs that incorporates civic competencies, establishing student government bodies, developing student seats in school and district committees, and providing opportunities for ELs to participate in service learning. For example, district Leaders can dedicate funding for educators to organize [debate](#) clubs, create opportunities to meet local candidates, or coordinate community volunteer efforts to support civic activity. District leaders also set expectations for educators to create authentic ways for ELs to engage with the community that capitalize on their bilingual and bicultural assets. They encourage the development of partnerships with community-based organizations, universities, and local business leaders to create opportunities for ELs to contribute to civic life. In addition, district leaders can highlight the importance of ELs’ contribution to civic life by supporting and recognizing educators, staff, and school leaders who develop innovative and culturally responsive opportunities for ELs.

Actions-at-a-Glance: Graduating Civically and Globally Prepared

Graduating Civically and Globally Prepared / or Career Ready: What can educators at the district level do?

- Develop districtwide expectations of EL involvement in and contribution to civic life
- Support educators in developing curriculum and instructional practices that promote EL's civic and global competencies
- Establish supports for helping ELs successfully participate in civic opportunities
- Set target goals for EL participation in civic and service-learning opportunities (student government and other civic clubs and organizations, service learning, etc.)
- Partner with community organizations to offer volunteering and civic learning opportunities
- Leverage ELs assets, linguistic and culturally diverse perspectives to support civic engagement and the development of global competencies for all students

Planning Resources

DESE Practical Tools and Resources

[Planning for Success](#) offers resources to guide districts through strategic planning and continuous improvement processes.

[Implementation of History, Social Science, and Civics Education](#) presents key elements of the 2018 History and Social Science Curriculum Framework.

[Next Generation ESL Project Curriculum Resource Guide](#) provides resources to create asset-based units of instruction for ELs.

[ESL Model Curriculum Units](#) provide exemplars of curriculum for ELs. Several model units address civic topics.

[The Collaboration Tool](#) provides a tool for educators to co-develop curriculum for ELs.

[Standards Search by Keyword](#) provides a tool for searching the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, which include civics standards.

DESE Guidance

[History, Social Science, and Civic Education Framework](#) outlines curriculum expectations for students in grades K-12 and serves as a foundation for all students to be prepared to make informed civic choices and assume their responsibility for strengthening equality, justice, and liberty in and beyond the United States.

[Massachusetts Definition of College and Career Readiness and Civic Preparation](#) This Department resource unpacks the expectations of a Massachusetts graduate the skills and knowledge they will demonstrate.

[MassCore](#) This Department Webpage offers the history and information regarding the Massachusetts state recommended course of study for high schools.

Federal Resources

[National and Community Service Programs](#) provides information related to national community service initiatives.

[Corporation for National and Community Service](#) provides information about opportunities to engage in service to address the nation's pressing unmet needs.

Other Featured Resources

[Debate-Inspired Classrooms](#) offers resources that support instructional practices to support students in the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills necessary to engage in civic opportunities.

[Waltham Partnership for Youth \(WPY\)](#) provides information about a community organization dedicated to identifying the needs of youth and leveraging resources to address them. It is based on the belief that youth should have the opportunity to become productive citizens in the community and the workforce and builds innovative programming and partnerships to accomplish this.

[The Center for Civic Education](#) provides information about expectations for civics knowledge and practice, including the [National Standards for Civics and Government](#) and available resources for educators.

[Empowering ELLs through Strong Community-School District Partnerships for Enrichment](#) presents a community's enrichment initiative resulting from a collaboration between a high school, the community, and higher education institutions.

[Creating Active Citizens: Ideas for Civic Engagement Lessons](#) provides suggestions for resources that can be used to introduce students to the concept of civic engagement.

[Guidebook: Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning](#) outlines proven practices for encouraging effective civic engagement and provides examples of vignettes and proven projects.

[Problem Based Learning](#) (PBL) describes this student-centered approach where students learn about a subject by working in groups to solve an open-ended problem that drives the motivation and the learning. PBL can be used for civic engagement and participation.