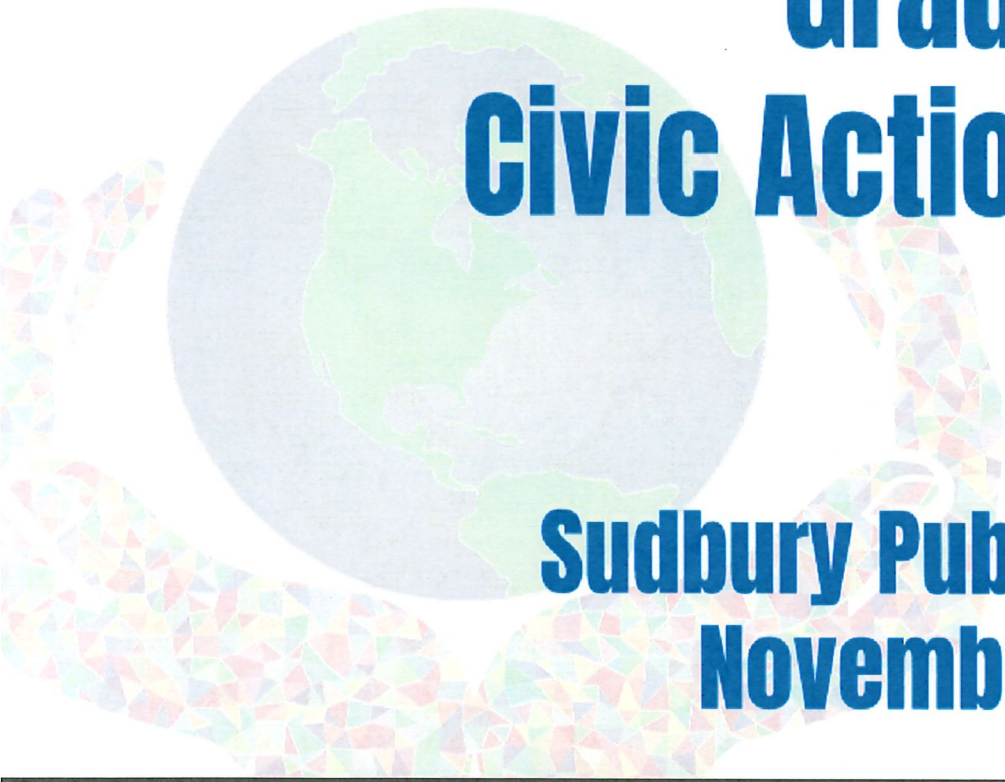




# **Grade 8 Civic Action Project**

**Sudbury Public Schools  
November 2021**



# **Agenda**

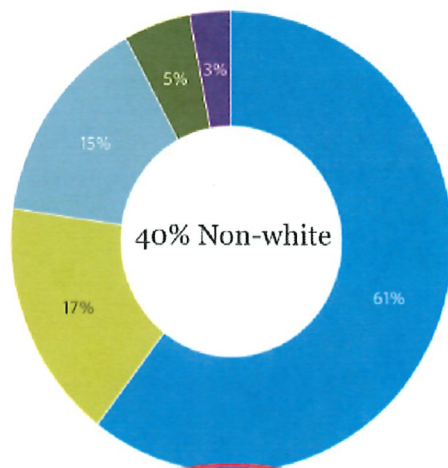
- **Background information**
  - **Goal**
  - **Purpose**
  - **Key components**
  - **Examples**
  - **Project stages**
  - **Stakeholders**
  - **Questions**
- 

# Some Statistics:

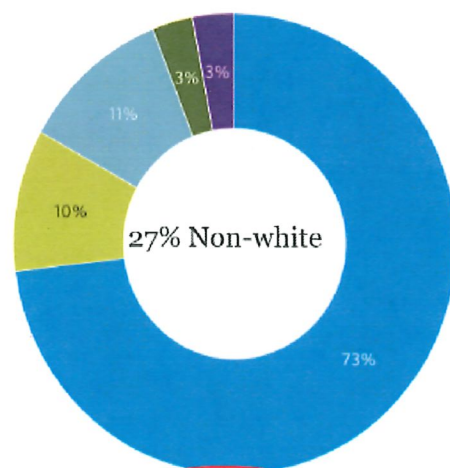
## Younger Voters Were More Diverse than Older Voters in 2016

Among all 2016 voters in each age group, the percentage who identified as a member of each racial/ethnic group

■ White ■ Latino ■ Black ■ Asian ■ Other



Voters ages 18-29



Voters ages 30+



## Some Statistics:

Only 56% of Americans  
can name all three  
branches of government.  
20% cannot name any.

Among the top 37  
democracies in the  
world, the United States  
ranks 32nd in voter  
participation.

MA Voter Participation  
for Ages 18-24 in 2016  
was 39%, in 2020 it  
was 52%.

On the U.S. Citizenship Test,  
90% of immigrants can score at  
least 60% correct. 33% of  
native-born citizens can and only  
19% of people under age 45.

Currently, funding for STEM  
education is at \$50 per student,  
and civics education is funded  
at 5¢. This is a difference of  
1,000%.



## Some Statistics:

Forbes Magazine wrote an article on Feb. 21, 2020: "Will U.S. Education Remedy a Half-Century of Neglecting Civics Education?"



January 6, 2021



**On November 8, 2018, Governor Charlie Baker signed the law stating: "Each public school serving students in the eighth grade and each public high school shall provide not less than 1 student-led, non-partisan civics project for each... Civics projects may be individual, small group or class wide"**

# Goal:

To independently engage in the Standards of Practice:

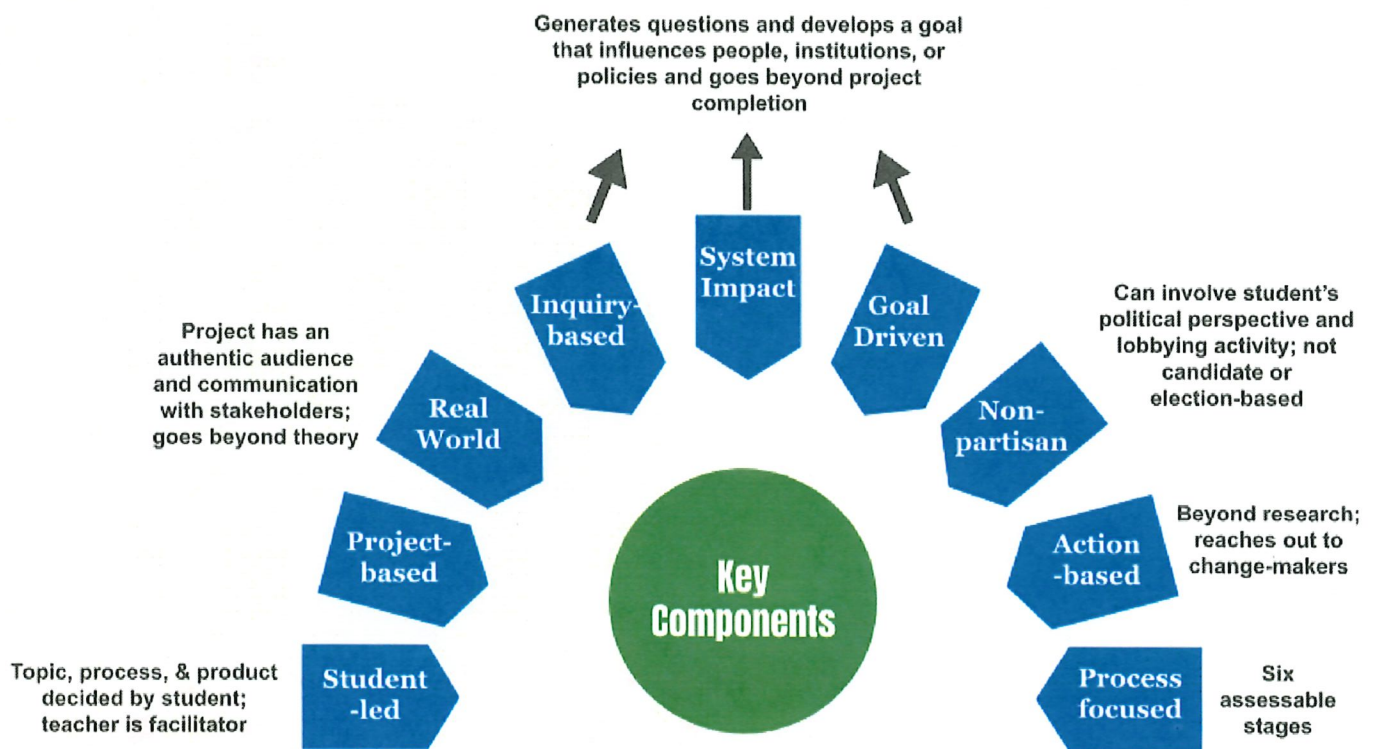
- I. **Demonstrate** civic knowledge, skills, & dispositions
- Inquiry-based { 2. **Develop** focused questions or problems & **conduct** inquiries
- Connect to { 3. **Organize** information from multiple sources
- primary and { 4. **Analyze** purpose & point of view; **distinguish** fact from opinion
- secondary { 5. **Evaluate** the credibility & relevance of sources
- sources { 6. **Argue or explain** conclusions with valid reasoning & evidence
- 7. **Determine** next steps and **take** appropriate **action**

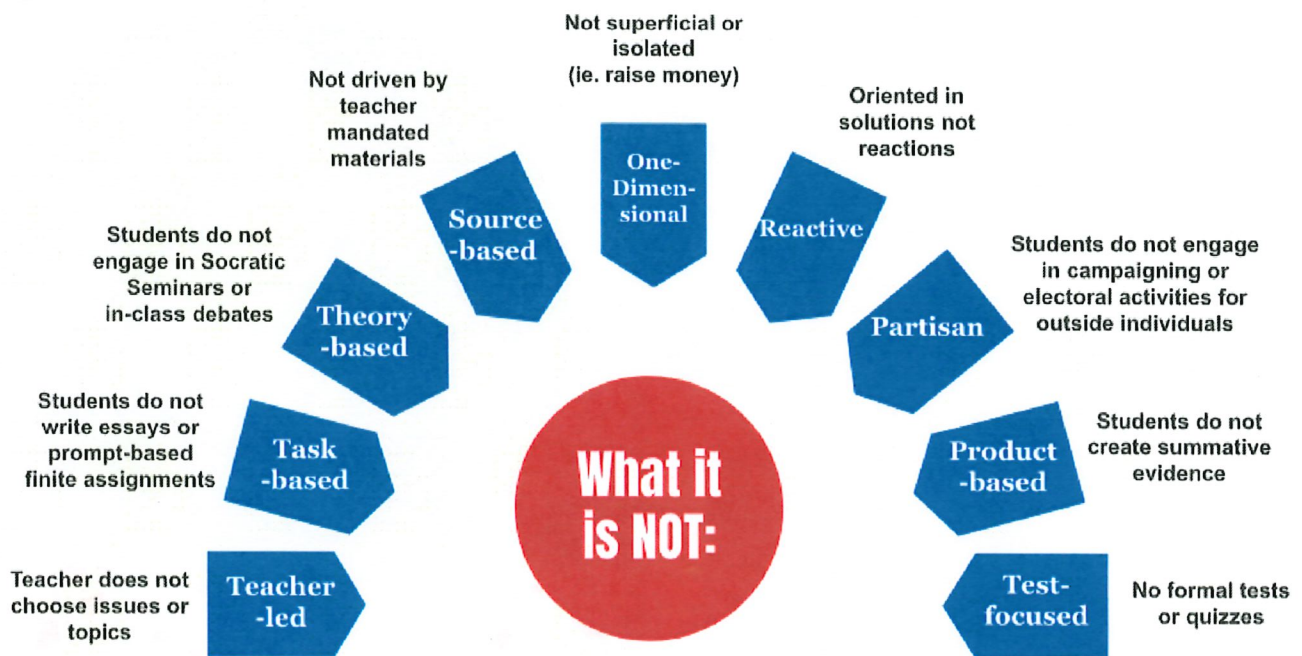


# Purpose:

**To serve as a capstone experience which will promote the ability to:**

- Analyze complex issues
  - Consider differing points of view
  - Make logical arguments
  - Support claims with evidence
  - Engage in civil discourse with those who hold opposing positions
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the connections between federal, state, and local policies, including issues that may impact the student's school or community
- 





## Focus Issue & Goal:

**Substance Abuse:** Limit the sale of flavored vaping products to adult-only stores.

## Sample Actions:

Proposed legislation at the state level; increase education in Health classes; implement vaping “buy back” program; create peer education group

\*The Lowell 8th grade students retained David M. Nangle 17th Middlesex, to sponsor Bill HD.1484 and it arrived at the State House in April 2019. A hearing was held on July 16, and Governor Baker signed into law on November 27.



Some of the many (approx 50) Joseph G. Pyne School students that worked on a Teen Vaping Legislation project this spring stand with their teacher Michael Neagle on right, students L-R, Alexia Santos 15, Emily Haas 14, Madison Scott 13, Ava Sullivan 14, Nichollas Fusco 14, Julyen Martinez 13, Michael Dailey 14 and Michael Neagle (teacher), all students are in the 8th grade. SUN/David H. Brow

By [ELIZABETH DOBBINS](#) | [edobbins@lowellsun.com](mailto:edobbins@lowellsun.com) | Lowell Sun

August 17, 2019 at 1:00 am

LOWELL — To learn about government, students introduced a vaping bill to the statehouse...

# Examples:

## Focus Issue & Goal:

***Mental Health:*** Increase the number of Social Workers at their middle school

***Financial Aid:*** Establish a scholarship program for youth sports programs

***Environment:*** Lessen town's impact on climate change by eliminating the use of plastic bags in local businesses

***Literacy:*** Establish town-wide 'book nooks' and secure free books to outfit them

***Health:*** Establish a school-based food pantry to address student food insecurity

***Music:*** Create a program to donate used instruments to low-income students

***Recreation:*** Convert an abandoned courtyard into an outdoor learning space

***Art:*** Run a program to create a tile mosaic with messages about inclusion & diversity

# Six Stages

## Stage 1: Examining Self and Civic Identity

Explore issues and topics for self, their families and their communities

## Stage 2: Identifying an Issue

Identify an issue - involves building consensus and collaborative decision making

## Stage 3: Researching and Investigating

Engage in research to develop common language, background knowledge, & possible root causes of the issue

## Stage 4: Developing an Action Plan

Determine the best tactics to address the root cause of the issue - Three broad categories: 1) Developing an argument 2) Rallying support 3) Lobbying decision makers

## Stage 5: Taking Action

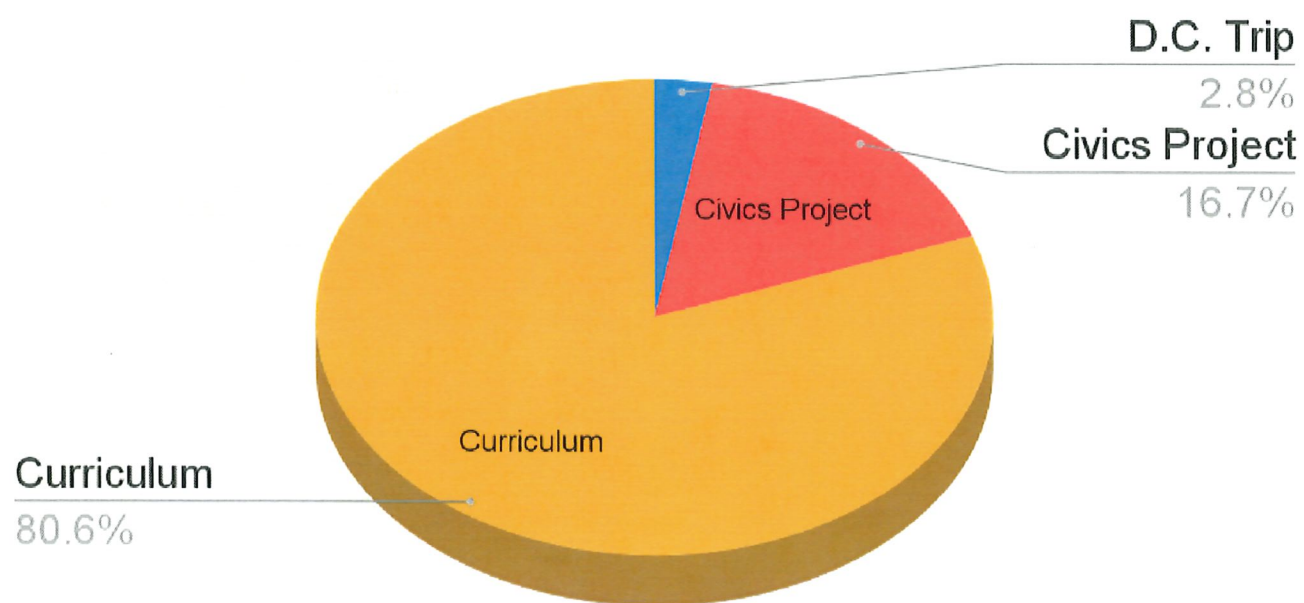
Move beyond the walls of the classroom to exercise their voice - This stage is most unique to each project

## Stage 6: Reflecting and Showcasing

Ends with a final reflection and a showcase to support pride and ownership in the work - Opportunity to reach larger conclusions about civic engagement & citizenship

*Success is not defined by the policy goal being achieved.*

## 8th Grade Program



# **Stakeholders** **Who will be involved?**

**Teachers**

**Students**

**School  
Leadership**

**Parents**

**Outside  
Organizations**  
Historical Society  
Cultural Council

**Local / State  
Government**  
School Committee  
Town Committee  
Selectboard

**Media**  
Local or regional  
newspapers & websites  
Social media  
Local cable TV

*The philosophy in the school room of one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next. -Abraham Lincoln*

**Questions?**

2020 Millennial Poll Analysis, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/29/poll/index.html>  
 “An Act relative to the sale of flavored vaping products,” <https://www.malegislature.com/bills/2020/0001-0050/0001>  
 Annenberg Public Policy Center Survey, 2020  
 Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education

Annenburg Public Policy Center Survey, 2020

Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education