

"Educating Civically Engaged Youth in Oregon"

Today we have shared a story with you ... a story that began long ago when our country's founders recognized the need to educate citizens in the principles of democracy and established the public education system. This has always been, and continues to be, an important story for anyone focused on developing an effective workforce because we know that good citizens are effective contributors to their communities.

And so our story stops here for lack of an ending... you've heard several pieces of the story from many different perspectives, all of whom are here today because they recognize the importance of a comprehensive civics education.

The good news is that our ending doesn't need huge amounts of money thrown at it, & it doesn't need "people power" that we don't already have in our classrooms and communities... but it does need a shift in thinking. Here's how you can help:

- This story needs Legislative Leadership to require the Department of Education to comply with the *existing* Oregon statutes, specifically ORS 329.025 that calls for rigorous content standards in a variety of subjects including history and civics, and ORS 336.067 that directs public schools to give special emphasis to the study of the Constitution, & "other lessons that promote & develop the citizenry and teach respect for all..."
- We need leadership from the Department of Education to support a strong social studies and civics curriculum including the professional development that teachers need, & want
- We need anyone involved in shaping education policy from the OEIB to the school district level to add the words "civic engagement" to the often repeated mantra of "college & career" so that it now becomes "college, career, and civic engagement"

We'd also like to update you on our efforts closer to home. CC of Portland has always chosen to lead by example and will soon announce a new partnership with the Multnomah Bar Association & their Foundation in support of a civics award program that will recognize outstanding community efforts for youth civic engagement. The award winners will be announced at a Friday Forum on October 11 & we would like to see all of you there to be recognized for your efforts on the state level. We are also working on a partnership between our largest school dist, PPS, and PSU, and continue to advocate for youth civic engagement at public meetings. We sincerely thank you for your time today and for all of your efforts on behalf of our citizens, particularly those who have not yet had the opportunity to find their voices.

Jan Christensen, Chair
Civic Engagement Advocacy Committee, City Club of Portland