Civic Data to Inform Student Action

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Introductions

• Name/School/Organization/Role

• What does civic learning mean to you?

• To what extent is there inequity of civic learning experiences in your school?
Objectives

• Analyze the civic empowerment gap in Illinois high schools
• Discuss how schools can address issues of inequity as it relates to civic learning and engagement
Meira Levinson, in her widely acclaimed 2012 book, *Leave no Citizen Behind*, outlines a "...profound civic empowerment gap".

There is "...incontrovertible evidence that poor and non-white students are receiving demonstrably less and worse civic education than middle-class and wealthy white students."
“...A student’s race...determines the availability of school-based civic learning opportunities that promote voting and broader forms of civic engagement”

- African-American students reported fewer civic-oriented government classes
- Asian-Americans report fewer open classroom environments
- Latinos report fewer community service opportunities and open classroom environments

Source: Kahne and Middaugh, 2008
In high school, the civic achievement gap rivals that of literacy and math, and correlates with less exposure to proven practices.

- 2010 gaps:
  - White/Black: 29 points
  - White/Hispanic: 19 points
  - White/Asian-Pacific Islander: 3 points

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2011
Analysis of 2014 NAEP Civics 8th grade middle school results also suggest disparities related to civic learning.
Analysis of 2010 NAEP Civics results suggest that exposure to proven practices fails to fully close the achievement gap

Test scores for Black and Hispanic students exposed to current events discussions, debate, and simulations still trail those of white students with no exposure to these practices.

Source: Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2013
Analysis of student participation in the 2017 AP Government and Politics test in Illinois revealed similar racial disparities.
And student performance on the APGOV test provides additional evidence of a civic achievement gap.

APGOV Scores of 3 or Higher by Race

- Two or More Races: 57.1%
- White: 55.5%
- Pacific Islander: 55.6%
- Hispanic: 29.6%
- Black: 30.6%
- Asian: 64.9%
- American Indian: 33.3%
The Illinois Democracy Schools Initiative debuted in 2006, has since grown to a statewide network of 74 high schools, and focuses on both students’ civic learning opportunities and the organizational culture of schools.
We have begun to disaggregate student survey data by race and encountered evidence of disparate access to civic learning opportunities.

Extracurricular activity participation by race

- **White**: 86% (2016), 83% (2017)
- **Hispanic**: 66% (2016), 67% (2017)
- **Black**: 70% (2016), 76% (2017)
- **Asian**: 82% (2016), 86% (2017)
We have also encountered evidence of disparate civic engagement outcomes, such as, “Once I am 18, I plan to vote regularly.”

2016-2017 Average

- White: 69% Strongly agree/agree, 16% Neutral, 9% Strongly disagree/disagree, 7% Don't know
- Hispanic: 63% Strongly agree/agree, 19% Neutral, 10% Strongly disagree/disagree, 8% Don't know
- Black: 62% Strongly agree/agree, 19% Neutral, 11% Strongly disagree/disagree, 8% Don't know
- Asian: 67% Strongly agree/agree, 16% Neutral, 8% Strongly disagree/disagree, 9% Don't know

[Bar chart showing the percentages for each group]
Since passage of the Illinois civics course requirement in Illinois, we have supported implementation among teachers, schools, and districts, and measured its impact.
The course itself is being broadly implemented across the state, but there are some concerns about access among LatinX students

Did you take a social studies course that was completely about how the government works and your role in participating in public decisions?
The good news is that those taking the course are reporting exposure to proven civic learning practices across race/ethnicity.

This year, in my classes, I have discussed controversial issues (percent agree/strongly agree):

- LatinX: 88.6/85.5
- Black: 69.4
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 84
- White: 84.5
- Two or more races: 79.4
- Other: 85.2
- No Course: 80.8
- Course: 92.9
- No Course: 69.2
- Course: 81.9
But as with Democracy Schools, there is evidence that equality does not equate with equity given disparate outcomes.

I have the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in politics and public issues (percent agree/ strongly agree)
But as with Democracy Schools, there is evidence that equality does not equate with equity given disparate outcomes.

Getting involved in improving my community is important to me (percent mostly/ completely true):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>No Course</th>
<th>Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LatinX</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/ Pacific Islander</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
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Back to Democracy Schools, students of color have higher responses to a few questions including, “In high school so far, have you participated in a poetry slam, youth forum, musical performance, or other event where young people express their political views?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In high school so far, have you taken part in a peaceful protest, march, or demonstration?

Yes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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</table>
2018 Democracy Schools Trends

- Data was disaggregated by race for each individual school in our most recent cohort.
- Results show evidence of a civic empowerment gap between Black and Hispanic students and White majority student populations with:
  - Activities
  - Student Voice
  - School Climate
  - Volunteering
  - Civic Skill Development
  - Cognitive Engagement
  - Intention to Vote
Discussion

• The 2016 and 2017 Democracy School cohorts defy national trends in offering equal civic learning opportunities across races (with the exception of student activities)
• Yet evidence of a civic empowerment gap still exists with respect to voting, political interest, and commitment to improving one’s community with those cohorts and individual school data points to additional levels of disparity.

• How do you account for these disparities?
• How do we improve access to these civic learning opportunities?
• Where do we see successes with students of color?
• How do we leverage those successes to strengthen civic learning in our schools?
It’s also important to interrogate the current state of civics curricula and the extent to which it aligns with students’ lived experiences.

**Principles of Lived Civics:**

1. Students of color enter classrooms with significant political knowledge and experience.
2. Students’ race, identity, and lived experiences should be central to civics curricula.
3. Educators must account for power and privilege in classrooms and how they impact students’ engagement with civics content.
4. Educators must have access to quality, continuous, reflective professional development to support Lived Civics classrooms.
Everyone will receive a question that prompts thinking on what we can do as educators to incorporate a “Lived Civics” framework into our classes.

1. Take 2 minutes to think about your responses to the questions you have.

2. Pair and share - find someone you do not know and share your thoughts with a partner (we will find 2 different partners and have 4 minutes with each partner)

3. Large group debrief
What can we do as educators to incorporate this framework into our classes?

- How are my students participating in the selection or shaping of the topics, themes and issues covered?
- How have I integrated the study of race, power and identity—including resistance narratives—into the curricula?
- How does my practice and the curriculum I implement acknowledge what students are bringing to the classroom and honor their lived experiences, critical analyses and commentary?
- How are students invited to co-construct the classroom community and in what ways does the learning space support students to explore, challenge, and share their ideas, experiences, and identities?
- Do students have an opportunity to question and interrogate traditional structures and power dynamics both in the classroom and beyond?
- How do I facilitate conversations that are difficult for me or for my students? How do I invite students to identify issues and themes that are critical to them but might be outside of my own comfort zone?
- How have I explored my own positioning and experiences relative to race, identity and power and how that shapes what I do and who I am in the classroom?
Triangle, Square, Circle

• *What is something pointed that stands out for you?*

• *What is something that squares with your prior/thinking or experience?*

• *What is something that is circling in your head or something that you are still wondering about?*
Citations


