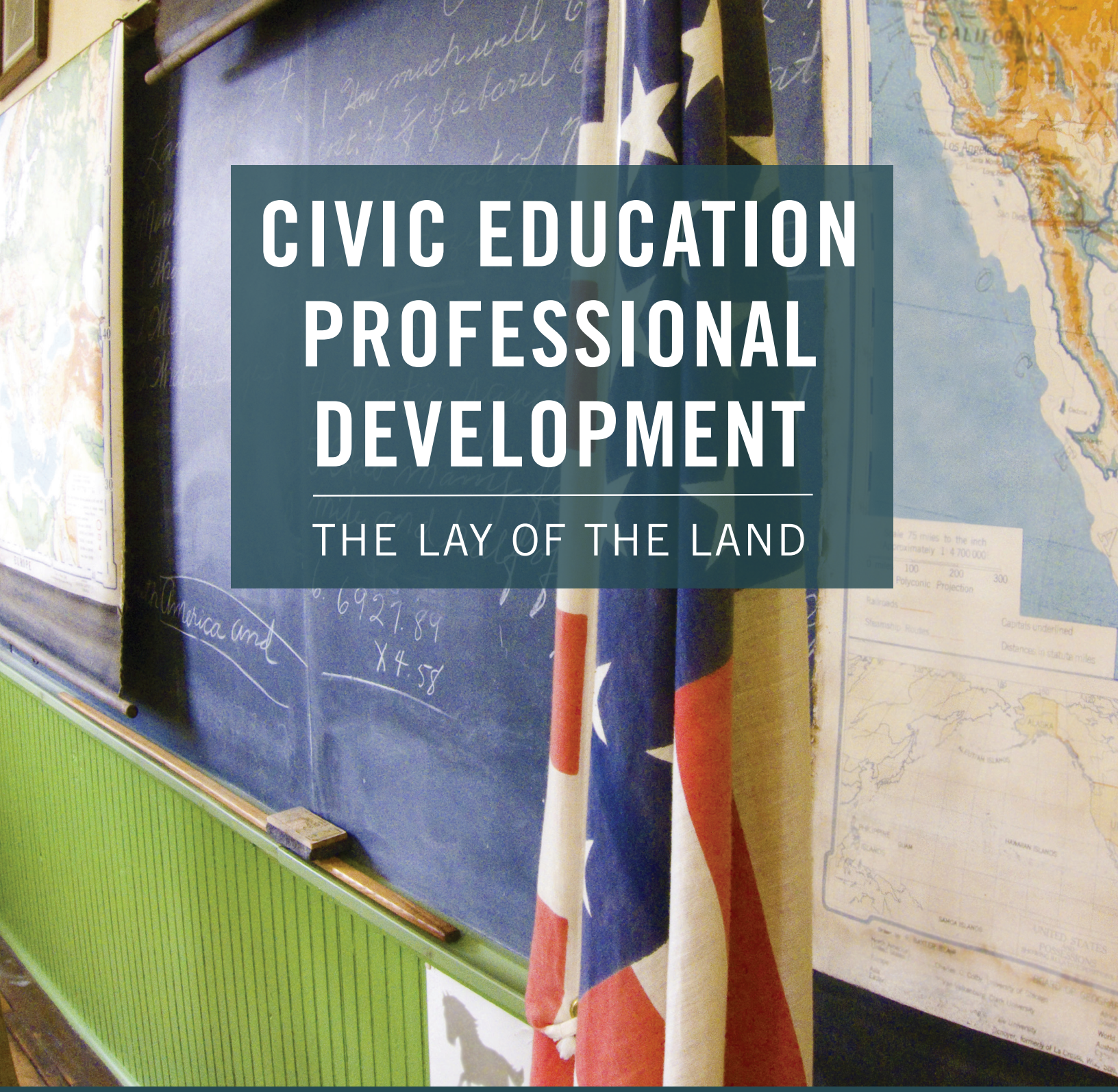

CIVIC EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE LAY OF THE LAND

REBECCA BURGESS

March 2015

AEI

A REPORT OF THE AEI PROGRAM ON AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

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AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

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Executive Summary

Democracy requires well-informed citizens, with the habits and mind-set required to maintain a free and self-governing society. Teachers, in turn, are key to establishing those habits of heart and mind on which democracies rely. As such, teachers benefit from exposure to professional development (PD) opportunities that refresh and augment their knowledge and classroom skills in the area of civics.

But education officials and policymakers face a host of competing priorities, and support for professional development in civics has been limited. One crucial consequence is the lack of research regarding current civics PD programs. Accordingly, the AEI Program on American Citizenship set out to survey the providers of civics PD, delving into their purposes, methods, and views to create a first-ever overview of PD in civics.

This study revolves around an essential question: what is the nature and range of PD for secondary civics teachers in the United States? Our aim is to reveal a portrait of current practice through a combination of interviewing and surveying current civics PD providers and through reviewing the current literature on high-quality PD. Here is what we learned.

Mission and Purpose

- Civic knowledge, skills, and engagement make up the key components that civics PD programs identify as their primary "deliverables." However, beyond promoting these elements of civic education in general, PD organizations are, with some exceptions, not likely to define what specific understanding of citizenship and civic education they seek to promote through their programs.

- Although PD programs emphasize as their ultimate goal improving students' knowledge of history and the foundations of democratic government, PD organizations appear to shy away from increasing a participating teacher's own understanding or ability to teach specific facts, dates, and major events in America's constitutional heritage.

- PD programs do retain fairly traditional elements of civic education as the core of the civic knowledge they promote, such as the meaning of representative democracy and civil society. They also frequently touch on the subject of the market economy, and they give high value to expanding knowledge about human rights and the role of the United States in the world.

- The primary civic skills that PD programs address with teachers are those related to organized deliberation. PD explores how to improve students' ability to work effectively with others through consensus building, but also helps them develop the skills required to defend their own positions.

- PD organizations emphasize civic dispositions that balance the exercise of individual rights with the responsibilities of citizenship. However, what remains unaddressed is how or whether the civic dispositions encouraged coalesce into a broader sense of attachment to the American polity.

Organizational Structure, Funding, and Evaluation

- PD organizational structure can vary widely, with no one organizational template for civics PD organizations.
- PD programs are typically directed by individuals who have considerable professional and educational experience in the field.
- The cost—in time and money—of participating in a PD program can affect who applies to, and who eventually shows up for, PD.
- Federal and state funding have shifted away from civics as the nation's education focus in recent years has turned toward science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects.
- PD organizations are also restricted in their ability to maintain a long-term contact with their program participants, which affects their ability to carry out long-term assessments or evaluations of their program offerings.
- Although existing PD organizations already do much with little, providing additional resources to assess effectiveness of programs in the classroom would be an important assist to the field of civic education.

Introduction

Americans' trust in government has plummeted to a near-historic low. Numerous polls have dramatized how deep this discontent runs. But this seemingly stark political landscape has helped renew interest in the role that long-neglected notions of civics and civic education can play in the nation's short- and long-term health. After 40-plus years of having to wander in the education agenda desert, in 2014, civics began to be welcomed back into classrooms from Massachusetts to Florida to California.

A growing number of state legislatures are now considering bills that would require students to pass the US citizenship exam as a requirement for graduation. As of this writing, Arizona and North Dakota have been the first to pass such legislation. In summer 2014, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education adopted a policy (the first in the nation) to make civics a part of every undergraduate degree at state community colleges and public four-year universities. These efforts run parallel to research and academic scholarship spanning more than a decade's worth of time that have sought to reinvigorate the dialogue around civic education. But to date, district officials and state policymakers seem largely uninterested in the teacher element of the civic education formula—that is, in making sure teachers are properly prepared to carry out civic education responsibilities in the classroom. This is especially true when it comes to ongoing professional support or the professional development (PD) options available to them.

There has been a demonstrated lack of research in this area, even while research has been conducted on teacher effectiveness and PD in the fields of science and mathematics. And while high performance of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) students is widely acknowledged to be linked to high-quality teachers, the corollary truth for the field of civic education has not spurred any similar assessment by the education or policymaking establishment. Given the diminished interest in civic education over the past several decades, and the emphasis placed by advocates of school reform on science, math, and literacy, this is not surprising. But it ill fits with the widely accepted view that democracies depend on an educated citizenry and that the most important institution for inculcating the knowledge and principles to sustain democracy has been America's school system.

* * *

To aid those in the classroom responsible for this high-stakes task, civic education teachers need the ongoing support of civics PD. In 2010, the AEI Program on American Citizenship conducted a study in conjunction with noted pollsters and analysts Steve Farkas and Ann Duffett to understand the views, thoughts, and frontline observations of our nation's high school history and social studies teachers. Among many stark findings that came to light by means of the study, *High Schools, Civics, and Citizenship: What Social Studies Teachers Think and Do*, was the following: teachers "appear uncertain about what the precise content of a proper civic education should be."[1]

In response to this finding, as well as to recommendations made in earlier studies such as *The Civic Mission of Schools*, the Program on American Citizenship began a multipronged study of currently available civics PD programs and opportunities.[2] Understanding that an analysis of current practice needed to be conducted to know what is being done and what needs to be done to improve PD, in 2011 we first conducted a survey of almost 2,000 alumni of existing PD providers.[3] Our aim was to learn about who participates in PD activities for civic education, why they participate, and what impact they believe their PD experiences have had on

their teaching. The focus, in other words, was on the teacher-as-student experience in PD training.

Our second effort flows from this first survey. Whereas the former concentrated on the participant experience, the succeeding effort, represented in the following pages, concentrates on the providers of civics PD themselves, delving more deeply into their purposes, methods, and views to create a first-ever comprehensive overview of PD in civics.

This current survey accordingly asks what the nature and range of PD is for secondary civics teachers in the United States. Research around this question will help define what existing PD in civic education looks like and how that compares with current definitions of high-quality, effective PD. Our aim is to reveal a portrait of current practice through a combination of interviewing and surveying current civics PD providers and through reviewing the current literature on high-quality PD.

The resulting report of civics PD can be used as a springboard for further research—research that seeks to identify which specific types of PD in civics affect teacher practice, and further out, research that examines the impact of civics PD on student achievement. For teachers, PD organizations, and education policymakers, this information is simply lacking—even though it is of vital importance to the country's long-term civic health.

Purpose

This report represents a collaborative effort of the AEI Program on American Citizenship and civics PD programs to arrive at a deeper understanding of the nature and range of PD offerings that are available to secondary civics teachers in the United States. The study was undertaken to provide the information gathered to education policymakers, state departments of education, district administrators, and the civics PD organizations and their funders.

A clearer portrait of the purpose, form, and focus of teacher PD programs in civics has been a long-standing demonstrated need, and not just for research's sake. Numerous studies—such as Michael Garet's 2001 report *What Makes Professional Development Effective?*—have reinforced the finding that transforming classrooms and student learning depends on high-quality teacher PD. Math and science PD practices are routinely examined and measured according to best practices with this end in mind, but the national focus on the math and science fields has obscured the fact that civics PD practices remain largely unexamined.[4] Consequently, little clarity exists on what constitutes high-quality PD in civics.

The bulk of PD for civics teachers today remains a menu of unconnected events that teachers can choose to participate in or not. And while high-quality PD programs for secondary civics teachers certainly exist, it is not clear whether their quality results from an application of the standards of best practices from other content areas transposed to the civics field or from a common set of elements unique to civics PD. This uncertainty exists because, to date, no cohesive study has been undertaken on how best to develop the teaching and practice of civics teachers.[5]

The remedy lies in researching the nature of existing PD programs for secondary civics teachers. This will both help define what is happening in the field and make it easier to compare it with the standards formulated for high-quality teacher PD. By clarifying existing practices, the survey's results help make possible the identification of the best, most productive types of civics PD to design and support in the future.

Defining Civic Education

When James Madison wrote that "a people who mean to be their own Governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives," the "Father of the Constitution" was echoing the common—and long-standing—belief that a government designed to be of, by, and for the people is only as strong and as durable as its citizens' understanding of the principles, institutions, and habits required to maintain a free and equal society.[6] The truth of this tenet continues to be championed by research and scholars in the field, even while current education reform debates maintain a near silence on the reintroduction of a vigorous civic education in the nation's public schools.[7]

But for any meaningful debate about the role of civic education in today's schools to take place, or for a serious examination of best practices in civics PD, there must be at least a working definition of civic education itself. Any definition of civic education must begin with some understanding of the word *civic*.

The *civis* to the Romans was the citizen, or the greater group of citizens, who formed the *civitas*, which represented the social body of citizens in a specific location or area, united by the fundamental things they shared in common: "forum, temples, colonnades, streets, statutes, laws, courts, rights of suffrage, to say nothing of social and friendly circles and diverse business relations with many," as Cicero explains.[8] Cynthia Gibson and Peter Levine, two contemporary American

scholars in the field of civic engagement, mirror this older understanding when they identify the public sphere as encompassing the numerous aspects of voluntary associations, religious institutions, and schools in addition to the organs of government in their 2003 report *The Civic Mission of Schools*.[9]

But the reigning element in this idea of citizenship is social, an emphasis on the community aspect of a people united by law, customs, and institutions, rather than on the spatial component of physical, geographical enclosure (in Latin, the differentiation between these two components of a city were maintained by two different words—*civitas*, as mentioned previously, and *urbs*, which denotes the physical city).

This subtle but decisive differentiation between the communal and the physical city informs the role that the citizen as well as the body of citizens fulfills and, consequently, how the citizen ought to be educated and habituated in his rights and duties. Thomas Jefferson explained it this way: citizenship requires civic knowledge (the identification of rights, how to exercise "with order and justice" those rights the citizen retains, and how to choose "with discretion" the officials tasked with employing the citizen's delegated rights), the inculcation of sound civic habits, and an informed attachment to the American regime and the principles of the Constitution. "To instruct the mass of our citizens in these, their rights, interests, and duties, as men and citizens, [is] the object of education," Jefferson believed.[10]

Thus, just as the democratic citizen by definition participates in the activities of governing as well as of being governed, so civic education must provide a complex array of knowledge to a wide array of citizens. At a minimum, it includes knowledge for effective participation in public affairs, knowledge needed to elect officials who best demonstrate such an understanding, and an understanding of the rights and obligations we have as citizens. In its deepest sense, civic education thus reaches beyond simply helping individuals have a working familiarity with government structure and citizen rights. It also implies the need to habituate the young and new citizens to the habits of heart and mind on which vigorous democracies rely.

In keeping with this outlined understanding of the broad meaning of "civic," but also harkening to today's available body of research in the related fields, for the purposes of this survey civic education is thus defined as "the provision of information and learning experiences to equip citizens both to participate in the democratic process, to be governed by it, and to have an informed attachment to America's governing principles."

Defining Professional Development

Professional development has been used synonymously with numerous other terms. The National Staff Development Council has identified a variety of these terms to include (but are not limited to) staff development, in-service, teacher training, professional learning, and teacher development.[11] While all of these are legitimate designations, PD remains the preferred term because it explicitly equates teaching with a profession.[12]

Accordingly, PD will be used throughout this work. And for the purpose of this survey, we defined PD as "courses, seminars, and events that develop a teacher's skills, knowledge, and expertise."

Overview of Current Research

Research points to common elements of high-quality PD that lead to improved teaching and student learning.[13] In a seminal study conducted for the US Department of Education, Garet and colleagues Beatrice Birman and Andrew Porter, among others, developed a causal model identifying common structural and process features for high-quality PD.[14] They identified form, duration, and participation as the common structural components of any high-quality PD program.

Form includes a focus on structure and content. *Duration* is the length of the connected experience: are teachers provided support as they go about implementing their newly acquired knowledge and skills in their classroom? *Participation* refers to the opportunities facilitated for or afforded to teachers to work with colleagues.[15]

In addition to sharing identical structural components, these scholars argued that high-quality PD programs exhibit a common focus on content, active learning, and coherence. A focus on *content* allows

teachers the ability to deepen their own knowledge and skills to change their instructional practices. *Active learning* allows teachers to engage in the processes they need to use in the classroom to improve student learning, while *coherence* is an appreciation of the teacher's functioning within a given educational environment.[16]

In 2011, the Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools released the *Guardian of Democracy Report,* describing a vision of what constitutes high-quality civic education.[17] *Guardian of Democracy* outlines the goals of a high-quality civics program; the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students need; and the instructional practices that can best improve student learning. A majority of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions outlined are part of the civic education students receive at the secondary level through US history, government, or civics courses. It is vital, in other words, to ensure that secondary civics teachers are prepared to provide this sort of civic education to their students.

However, a study conducted by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) found that secondary teachers were largely unfamiliar with the elements of high-quality civic education outlined in *Guardian of Democracy*.[18] Through its survey of 80 teachers from across the nation, the CIRCLE study shows a large amount of variation in teachers' classroom practices with regard to instructional practices of civic skills, civic engagement, and awareness of civic issues and concepts. These surveys and reports bolster the already-stated need for data regarding high-quality civics PD.

Certainly, examples exist of high-quality PD programming for secondary civics teachers today. But meeting the high bar set by research on what constitutes the most effective PD programs is severely complicated by the fact that funding for PD in civics is meager at best. A concerted effort from the field is needed to inform funders of the benefits of PD in civics by analyzing what succeeds, and succeeds best. Step one in that effort, however, is obtaining a better understanding of the current landscape of programs and practices—a landscape this report hopes to detail.

Description of Process

This project is foremost a descriptive study. At the outset, we compiled an initial list of organizations to survey through discussions with the Social Studies Education Consortium, the AEI Program on American Citizenship, and in partnership with other leaders in the field. Once the initial list was established, we contacted the Council of State Social Studies Specialists both to review our compilation and to identify further programs. After the desired programs were identified, we contacted each to inquire about its willingness to participate. An online survey was then administered to representatives from interested programs. After the survey was closed, the data were compiled and analyzed.

The initial list of organizations and programs compiled to participate in our survey includes the Ashbrook Center at Ashland University, the Bill of Rights Institute, Center for Action Civics/Mikva Challenge, Center for Civic Education, Choices Program–Brown University, Close Up, Colonial Williamsburg, ConSource, Constitution Center, Constitutional Rights Foundation, Constitutional Rights Foundation–Chicago, C-SPAN, Facing History, Florida Joint Center for Citizenship, Generation Citizen, Gilder Lehrman, iCivics, Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics, Library of Congress, Mount Vernon, National Endowment for the Humanities, Newseum, Oakland School District, Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution at James Madison's Montpelier, and Street Law. State social studies specialists were also contacted for input regarding additional organizations with whom they or their teachers work for civics PD.

The final list of participating organizations and programs includes the Arizona Council for History Education; Ashbrook Center at Ashland University; Bill of Rights Institute; Center for Action Civics/Mikva Challenge; Center for Civic Education; Center for Education in Law and Democracy; Center for the Study of the American Constitution; Choices Program–Brown University; Classroom Law Project; Constitutional Rights Foundation; Educating for Democracy in the Digital Age; Earth Force; Generation Citizen; Law, Youth and Citizenship Program of the New York State Bar Association; League of Women Voters of NW Maricopa City;

Library of Congress; Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution at James Madison's Montpelier; We the People Programs in Rhode Island; Wyoming We the People; and one anonymous organization.

The specific survey questions were composed through a process of drawing on available research of high-quality PD. The key components identified were purpose, form, and focus.

- *Purpose* of PD: This connects directly to the "why" of a PD program—that is, understanding the specific purpose behind each program.
- *Form* of PD: This includes "how" the organizations design their PD efforts.
- *Focus* of PD: This outlines the "what" of the program or the knowledge and skills each is trying to build.

Summary of Findings

- PD programs in the field of civics by and large seek to bring about positive change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students. But because of the breadth and variety of subtopics in the civics subject area, PD providers typically signal that their purpose is to offer programs that promote civic activity or engagement, rather than to explicitly define what specific understanding of citizenship, civil society, or civic education they seek to promote through their programs.

- Based on the components of purpose, form, and focus, the survey results detailed reveal that organizations prioritize improving students' knowledge of history and the foundations of democratic government as the ultimate goal of the PD they offer teachers. As such, programs gave highest priority to "increasing [teacher] understanding of the key principles of American government and improve knowledge of US history." Consistent with findings from our earlier survey of high school civics teachers, however, programs gave lowest priority to "increasing [teacher] ability to teach key facts, dates, and major events."

- Leadership teams, often composed of veteran educators in the civic education field, create the shape of the specific PD offerings, which often include presentations and workshops stretching for a half or full day, with emphasis given to discussing the most effective methods of classroom implementation of concepts and ideas.

- Long-term assessments of the effectiveness of different methods and strategies are virtually nonexistent. The resources required to field such studies are not available in the supermajority of programs. Civics PD entities struggle to maintain in contact with past participants of their programs or to build formal alumni networks, though they see the benefit of investing in those areas.

- In terms of translating the PD content to the classroom to enhance instruction, the sponsoring PD programs identify various techniques, or "practices," to emphasize in their presentations. This variety contributes to having far less uniformity across organizations in regards to which teaching techniques or practices they emphasize to help teachers develop than there is about which key civic dispositions to encourage.

- When it comes to pedagogy, civics PD programs are overwhelmingly concerned with aiding their program participants to incorporate current local, national, and international issues and events into the larger classroom discussion, and in particular, drawing on those events that young people view as important to their lives.

  And while PD programs are concerned with helping teachers design and implement programs that act as a bridge between what students learn through performing community service and what they learn through classroom instruction, less than half of the surveyed programs place as strong an emphasis on the latter. Programs also tend to place a greater emphasis on helping teachers design and implement opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities outside of the classroom.

Mission and Purpose of Providers

PD programs in the field of civics by and large seek to bring about positive change in the classroom practices of teachers and in the learning outcomes of students. And while the goal that undergirds each organization differs from organization to organization in its stated reach and scope—ranging from perpetuating an understanding of the US Constitution to expanding the opportunity structure for the individual—each organization sees its ultimate purpose as contributing to the health of civil society.

Knowledge, skills, and engagement make up the key components that civics PD programs identify in their mission statements as their primary "deliverables." This mix reflects the intention of PD providers not just to enhance students' civic knowledge but also to encourage them to become active and engaged citizens in our democracy.

The content knowledge that civics PD organizations seek to cultivate in their program participants varies greatly, according to each organization's particular emphasis within the broad civics field. Because civics as a topic can be a harbor for history, geography, and government and for the study of key historical places, events, and texts, PD can successfully include or exclude any number of these elements in its programming. Alongside these civics categories are the elements Jefferson identifies: the identification of rights, how to exercise those rights for the benefit of the individual while also not to the detriment of society, and, finally, to encourage the practice of sound civic habits and an attachment to our own particular regime, structured on the foundation of constitutional principles.

The organizations surveyed reflect these variations in the type of civic knowledge that they propose to convey, in the purpose of that civic knowledge, and also in the shape of the programs they build to be the vehicles of that knowledge. Because of the broad scope of the civics field, however, the majority of civics PD organizations seem to prefer using inclusive language to generalize their mission rather than to define narrowly which aspect or area of civics they emphasize.

The mission statements of civics PD organizations are best captured by a Wordle-created visual (figure 1). The art graphic illustrates the most common elements by enlarging and bolding the specific words most often used, while words used rarely or only once are portrayed in smaller type on a decreasing scale.

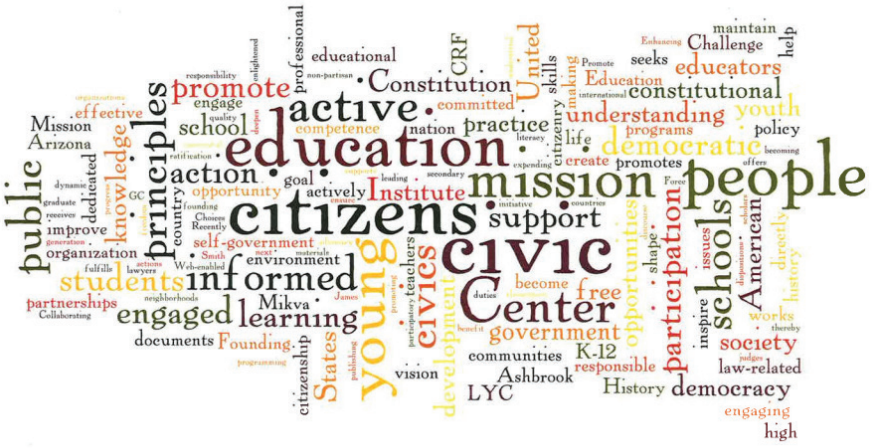
The Wordle graphic reveals that civics PD organizations signal that their purpose is to offer civic education, in which good citizenship is understood to be an active endeavor, rather than explicitly defining what specific understanding of citizenship, civil society, and civic education they seek to promote through their programs.

This generalized promotion of civic learning is echoed in the skill set attached to civic education that each organization seeks to pass on to its target audience. The majority of entities surveyed propose to strengthen the development of skills necessary to "promote civic competence," "for the practice of democracy," and for the "active participation in representative government" and to "become effective citizens able to participate fully in our democratic society."

One organization specified this further—its aim is to "create a citizenry that has the . . . skills to exercise the rights and responsibilities needed to maintain a free society." While this is perhaps more pointed, it parallels the language of active engagement several organizations adopt in relation to skills; skills these organizations are committed to improving are "advocacy," "public engagement," and "action civics." Public engagement itself spans the wide range of "participation in civic dialogue," being "dynamic community leaders," and improving the environment.

FIGURE 1

MISSION STATEMENTS OF CIVICS PD ORGANIZATIONS



Source: Survey on Professional Development in Civic Education

The target audience of the surveyed civics PD organizations is composed, individually or collectively, of students or youth, educators, and the people at large. Promoting and expanding civic knowledge among youth is the overwhelming motivation shared by the survey participants. Of the 19 respondents who described their organization's mission statement, only 6 did not specify the youth or young student component of their outreach. Of those six organizations, only two articulate that their intended audience is narrowed to the educators themselves, with only one entity defining its mission solely in terms of "being a resource for scholars." The remaining four organizations orient their mission toward strengthening society in general—among this set, using language such as "dedicated to promoting an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles" is a unifying feature.

The majority emphasis on increasing civic education among youth does not ignore the role of teachers and educators, however: while presumably phrases such as "the American people" are meant to include teachers, 10 organizations explicitly refer to schools or teachers in addition to students or youth as being their target beneficiaries. This explicit language is hardly the last word on the matter. Each mission statement recorded by the participating organizations clearly implies the necessary presence of educators or teachers. It is clear that teachers function as the aorta of these civic education organizations—they are the intermediary between the student and the civic organization's stated goal of promoting "an enlightened and responsible citizenry."

PD Organizational Structure, Participants, and Finances

Promoting and expanding civic knowledge is the guiding motivation of civics PD. This motivation is evident in the design of organizations' PD offerings. It influences who (and how) each organization chooses to oversee its PD programs generally, and it guides the processes and people involved in identifying, developing, implementing, and evaluating the specific PD programs.

Leadership

Organizations whose raison d'être consists entirely in providing PD to civics teachers are more likely to have traditionally recognizable chains of command and staff divisions. With program directors who report to an executive director or president, manage PD activities and oversee the staff team that delivers PD content, handle the associated administrative and logistical tasks, and oversee the recruitment of program participants, these PD organizations operate much like a standard service-oriented organization or business. They identify and serve a specialized product to a specific customer base, administer their funding, maintain their budgets, and occasionally report to oversight boards.

In instances in which PD programming is just one part of a parent entity, this structure is often less formulaic. The director of PD programming might function under only the loosest oversight. The director might also be the only staff member responsible for all pedagogical and administrative tasks. Or, the director might serve more as a middleman between his parent organization and teachers or school districts, identifying relevant third-party PD programs and providers to interested clients, but with no in-house staff or programming to manage, develop, or administer.

In short, PD organizational structure can vary widely, with no one template of internal structural organization that is specific to civics PD organizations.

When it comes to the director or executive board directly tasked with overseeing the PD effort, however, there is a uniformity of extensive professional experience shared between the survey respondents. PD directors are typically veterans in the field of civic education and civic engagement, having usually taught the social sciences for more than a decade, if not three. They also typically have advanced degrees in fields such as education, educational evaluation and research, or educational administration.

Directors also share a wealth of administrative experience—in education, as principals or even college administrators, and in nonprofits, as program administrators or even founders of civics organizations. Many have also been involved in community service. With such practical experience and knowledge in the field to draw on, PD leadership is well placed to identify the nature, scope, and particular "flavor" of PD programming to offer and promote.

Participants

PD providers understandably seek to tailor their PD offerings to the specific needs of teachers, differentiating programs to match the teachers' level of experience. Survey respondents indicated that they attempt to coordinate or work with teachers, schools, and districts, respectively, in identifying civic education needs, while also occasionally cross-referencing with other providers' programming to avoid duplication of offerings. This allows each organization to maintain a "brand" of PD that is consistent with its original mission and purpose, which influences, in turn, the type of teacher each recruits.

PD organizations identify and recruit teachers for their programs through a variety of means. While a small subset of organizations send out select invitations to predetermined candidates, nearly 30 percent of survey respondents actively recruit candidates for their programs and eventually choose candidates through a competitive application process. Other programs are more reactive, choosing to respond to requests from the district level for PD programming or, occasionally, directly from individual teachers. These last types utilize an open-enrollment system, allowing for a wide diversity in participants.

PD providers occasionally require applicants to commit to using the civic material covered during the course or directly implementing the sponsoring organization's signature program(s) in the classroom as a condition for admission. In addition, while some programs require teachers to have at least five years of teaching experience to be considered for the PD event, others develop programs targeted to teachers at different levels of experience, in different fields of study, and in different grade levels. All civics PD programs, however, articulate the desire to provide PD to those individuals whose teaching (and, therefore, whose students) will most likely benefit from the PD experience.

Nearly 90 percent of PD providers concurred that their programs are built for teachers with little training in teaching civics. Location—whether, for example, a teacher teaches in a certain setting (inner city, suburb, or rural)—does not factor into program design; grade level (including designations such as "Special Ed" and "Gifted and Talented") is a factor only half the time. The teacher's subject area nearly always carries significant weight with the PD organization. Civics PD programs are designed for social studies teachers most of all, although nearly 56 percent agreed that these programs could also be of value for English language arts teachers. A notable few indicated that they plan to expand that outreach to English language arts teachers as a result of Common Core State Standards requirements.

To identify the various levels of teachers, principals and districts, and communities at large in need of or interested in civic professional development, PD providers employ the traditional range of advertising and recruiting strategies. Word-of-mouth, social and media campaigns, presentations, and even direct mail and paid advertising are frequent methods that surveyed organizations use to create awareness of their existence and of PD opportunities. Organizations whose budgets for civics PD are minimal to nonexistent rely heavily, if not exclusively, on teacher-to-teacher word of mouth.

Finances

The cost—in time and money—of participating in a PD program can affect who applies to, and who eventually shows up for, PD. The data suggest that the majority of PD programs can cover only a portion of the cost for participants, sometimes waiving the application or participation fees or covering some amount of their travel or food expenses. The availability of funds on the part of both PD providers and participants, and occasionally space constraints, all factor substantially into how wide a net PD providers can cast for applicants and participants in their program.

With the shift in the nation's educational focus in recent years away from some subject areas—such as the social sciences and civics in particular—in favor of STEM subjects, federal and state funding has likewise shifted away from civic education. Most civics-related PD programs must raise the majority of funds through private grants or other fundraising efforts or rely on the goodwill and availability of volunteers who donate their time in planning and executing PD offerings. That being said, a small number receive operating funds from either a state government or from Congress (in the case of the Library of Congress, for example).

PD providers whose programs are incidental or a part of a larger organization's activities rely on grants and foundational support either to fund their PD operations in general or to support specific PD programs and projects. A handful also rely on contracted work or partnering with other civics and related organizations to share costs and resources. To supplement these grants, however, a significant portion of those surveyed find themselves having to charge attendees fees to apply to and participate in their programs.

Civics PD programs obviously do not wish to make the cost of attending their programs prohibitive for those teachers most in need of their educational benefits. Sometimes they are able to offer full or partial scholarships—75 percent of organizations do offer some level of support, such as reimbursing travel expenses, awarding gas cards, or including meals—but this is not a universal practice. In some cases, the state or school district will cover a portion of its teachers' costs. This, however, is becoming increasingly rare.

The cost of conducting PD programming varies, depending on structure, focus, and length. Traditional expenses include program development and materials as well as staff salaries; they can also include travel and food expenses and space rental fees. Accredited graduate degree programs are the most costly to operate and to attend, typically costing a participant anywhere from $400 to $535 per credit hour. For non–degree granting programs that offer multiple-day seminars, costs can range from $1,500 per participant to upward of $2,500 for the host. The participant's cost to attend a multiple-day seminar can total $1,500, although that amount fluctuates between organizations (anywhere from $250 to $1,500) depending on the funding available from the PD provider and the amount that the state or school district might reimburse to the teacher. Daylong seminars are significantly less costly, with an average price tag of $100 for the participant. Half-day programs typically charge around $50 to $75 per attendee. Only in rare cases do participants in any of these formats attend the program with no cost to themselves.

Given the sometimes substantial costs for attendees, teachers who do attend such programs obviously reflect a professional commitment to the field of civic education. Well aware of this fact, 75 percent of organizations also award some type of professional or education credit for program participation as an incentive. Release time and networking opportunities are also mentioned as incentives for individuals to participate in these civics PD opportunities.

Civics PD Program Design

Organizations consider different factors when designing their PD programs, taking into account their respective mission, trends in research, timeliness of topics, demonstrated need or interest, and availability of scholars and other resources. Topics or the theme of specific offerings are often determined by the "leadership team" (director of PD or an advisory board) in consultation with teachers, funders, district administrators, and their own internal evaluations. "Outside influences" on programming content can exist as well, in the form of state standards and best practices in the field or, most recently, in the form of the newly introduced Common Core standards. The latter was specifically mentioned as a new influence on PD programs, leading some to emphasize building programs and curricula that are aligned to the Common Core.

An organization's mission can obviously influence the shape of its PD offerings. Whereas one organization consciously shapes its programs to "eliminate the civic achievement gap and strengthen our democracy," another looks to proposed ballot measures and recent decisions of the state and federal supreme courts for steering guidance on content. Another organization invokes its mission to emphasize that it develops its programs according to its strengths—and whereas pedagogy is not its strength, knowledge of constitutional principles is, and therefore its programs are built around imparting and developing that knowledge among its PD program participants.

Ninety-four percent of civic programming takes place in full- or half-day sessions, and 61 percent of the time is devoted to mentoring. Well over half of the organizations (67 percent) provide their PD programs within district workshops. Not quite half of organizations utilize study groups, collaboratives, or courses for college credit. Approximately one-fourth of survey respondents offer online or self-paced courses as part of their PD portfolio. Meanwhile, in addition to their half- or full-day training educational offerings, three-quarters of organizations also conduct training seminars or institutes lasting longer than a day in total time. A few other methods of providing PD include book clubs, individual lectures and short workshops, weekend colloquia at historic sites, and brief, tailored webcasts or webinars.

In terms of a teacher's time commitment, in nearly 40 percent of cases the PD providers gauged their programs to consume between four to eight hours of a teacher's time. Providers also note the occasional 30- to 40-hour commitment from attendees that something such as a summer institute requires. This contrasts with the 12 hours of a weekend colloquia or the 2 hours of a webinar session.

Within the PD sessions, participants are consistently asked to discuss classroom implementation, problem solve, look at lesson plans, and even develop materials together. In fact, the supermajority of survey respondents (94 percent) designate classroom implementation as the top priority. This aligns with one of the key structural processes—active learning—of high-quality PD programs identified by leaders in the PD field. Encouraging teachers to work with their colleagues within the PD programs on planning and problem solving is another important element in the PD experience. However, less emphasis is placed on the importance of surveying samples of current student work.

Half of PD programs include a variety of activities designed for adult learning—for example, active engagement, teamwork, use of prior knowledge, and real-world applications (table 1). It is not surprising that roughly half of the programs make direct links to state and national standards for student learning and—to aid in that endeavor—give time to participants to reflect on how the program content connects with each

TABLE 1

CIVICS PD PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND COMPONENTS

Rate your program on the following characteristics or components. Our programs:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Involve participants in determining the topics and content	5.6%	16.7%	44.4%	22.2%	11.1%
Include a variety of activities designed for adult learning	5.6%	5.6%	16.7%	22.2%	50.0%
Include continued support and follow-up activities	5.6%	5.6%	16.7%	33.3%	38.9%
Clearly state teacher and student outcomes	5.6%	5.6%	27.8%	27.8%	33.3%
Focus on creating a learning climate is collaborative and respectful	5.6%	0.0%	11.1%	16.7%	66.7%
Are framed focusing on theory, demonstration, practice, and feedback	11.1%	0.0%	16.7%	11.1%	61.1%
Have proof that they increase student learning	5.6%	5.6%	27.8%	27.8%	33.3%
Are research based	5.6%	5.6%	27.8%	33.3%	27.8%
Are relevant to participants' needs	5.6%	0.0%	11.1%	16.7%	66.7%
Are compatible with other practices in the field	5.6%	5.6%	11.1%	16.7%	61.1%
Give time to participants to reflect on how program content connects with their individual school/district context	5.6%	0.0%	16.7%	22.2%	55.6%
Emphasize leadership development	5.6%	16.7%	27.8%	16.7%	33.3%
Are designed using many data sources	5.6%	16.7%	22.2%	16.7%	38.9%
Link directly to state and/or national standards for student learning	5.6%	0.0%	22.2%	16.7%	55.6%

Source: Survey on Professional Development in Civic Education

teacher's or participant's individual school or district context.

While approximately half of organizations "somewhat agree" that they solicit or involve participants in determining the topics and content of particular PD activities, more than one-third strongly agree that the activities are designed using many data sources, although slightly less feel that their activities are research based. Organizations are reluctant to say that their programs produce specific outcomes. Perhaps for these reasons, they also report that they are not as confident that they have evidence that their programs increase student learning. Only about one-third of organizations include within their specific program any long-term support or follow-up activities.

Program Assessment

Perhaps the PD providers' relative uncertainty that students improve because of their teacher's participation in PD is due in part to how they evaluate their PD activities. Programs rarely administer tests to their participants as a type of assessment, and they are not likely to ask their participants to write essays in response to specific program readings. Program attendees are more likely (40 percent) to be required to write an extended essay on the topic. But the most popular method for organizations to determine whether the participant has made progress in the PD program is by incorporating presentations or projects on an individual or group basis.

Every organization surveyed reported that participants in their programs complete a survey after the program's end. Very popular also is the interview method of evaluation—81 percent of organizations interview participants to provide feedback. Sixty-two percent of organizations report that data are collected from the participants' students; less than half (about 44 percent) conduct any type of classroom observation of their participants. Approximately half of organizations, however, report that they employ an evaluator (whether he or she is a third-party evaluator or PD staff is not made clear) who does observe their own program's PD sessions.

Organizations are split nearly in half in their decision to attach long-term or follow-up assignments as part of their participants' requirements. Some note a difference between their shorter and longer PD offerings, explaining that longer PD programs are more likely to have some subsequent assignment. Organizations that do make use of follow-up assignments typically do so because their program awards a form of graduate education academic credit. However, one organization specifies that, because the end goal of participants in their program is to become members in their leadership institute as teaching fellows, the following year is in a sense an extended long-term assignment in which they must implement the material they covered in the program in a meaningful way in their classroom. Another organization explains that if and when resources are available, it offers teachers an "implementation stipend" that is determined by teachers fulfilling a checklist of things they have to provide or activities they must participate in—for example, turning in samples of student work or organizing special classroom events or observations.

This lack of longer-term assignments or evaluation stemming from the PD program does not necessarily mean that the PD provider maintains no contact with its program participants. The majority of organizations attempt to maintain some type of contact with their program participants through social media platforms, email (sometimes individualized), and sometimes even through calls and arranging classroom visits. The email listserv is a popular means of maintaining contact with program alumni, becoming the way to alert them to additional events and opportunities.

These methods of contact allow organizations to establish and maintain a network of teachers, with the level of formality depending on the organization. On the informal side of the spectrum, some PD organizations use their summer on-campus graduate courses as a means of giving teachers an extended opportunity to connect with like-minded teachers and faculty. In a similar vein are organizations that have established an annual conference or combination of study groups, informal gatherings, or virtual meeting places such as blogs, emails, and online "learning communities." On the more formal end of the spectrum is the organization that divides teachers into working groups that share a focus throughout the year, the organization that hosts a monthly institute for a cohort of teachers, and the organization that graduates participants into teaching fellows for subsequent programs. A handful of survey

respondents note that they have attempted to establish some form of ongoing community, with various degrees of success or failure. A tiny minority make no claim to form any kind of network or learning community.

Focus: Content, Skills, and Disposition

The central task of every PD organization for educators is to design a program that offers participants the materials and the environment they need to hone the skills of their craft. Civics PD organizations design the content of their programs with an eye to increasing the participating teachers' ability to enhance their pupils' civic knowledge and civic skills. But a civics curriculum would be incomplete if it did not also address civic dispositions—the fostering of attitudes and habits conducive to civic participation. Accordingly, PD for teachers incorporates programming content that is designed to promote an informed participation in civic affairs, involving the exercise of both civic responsibilities and rights.

Civics PD organizations design the content of their programs above all with the desire and goal of increasing the participating teachers' ability to enhance their pupils' historical knowledge and to impart an understanding of the key principles of American government, as well as to strengthen teachers' classroom management skills. PD providers also choose their content with an eye toward growing teachers' capacity to design service learning activities for their students while increasing teachers' ability to prepare students to meet state-mandated academic standards, all within the context of, or alongside of, the goal of developing further an appreciation or respect for America's constitutional heritage (table 2).

But helping teachers is just the penultimate goal for the majority of these organizations. As table 3 illustrates, when PD organizations look to the longer-term goal of benefiting students through helping their teachers, three-quarters of those surveyed stated that their programs prioritized above all the goals of getting students to be informed and thoughtful citizens, to have a working knowledge and appreciation of history and of the fundamental principles of American democracy, and to have a capacity for discussion and deliberation about public issues.

Content is the vehicle for meeting these priorities—regarding teachers and students alike—and is the keystone on which all PD organizations lean to have an ameliorating influence on teachers' instructional practices and the latter's ability to meet the needs of learners.[19] For this reason, when researchers describe the focus of PD activities, their concern is to reveal the contours and the sinews of the programming content and the "active learning" practices adopted by the program and, especially, to see whether the program has established coherence between its stated goals and content and its program activities. "Focus" is the umbrella term used by researchers to bundle these interrelated aspects.

Content

Organizations prioritize improving *students*' knowledge of history and the foundations of democratic government as the ultimate goal of the PD they offer teachers. This goal is closely followed by the desire to increase students' social and political participation. They are at least partly in line with the view of Jefferson and others of the American founding generation that civic education encompasses civic knowledge of rights and duties, the inculcation of sound civic habits, and an informed attachment to the American regime and the principles of the Constitution.

Content in a PD program is not likely to be selected for an activity if it is geared explicitly toward increasing the teacher's personal understanding of or ability to teach key facts, dates, and major events, or developing his or her appreciation of and respect for America's constitutional heritage. Surveyed organizations were more likely to rank as important priorities designing

TABLE 2

CIVICS PD PROGRAM PRIORITIES FOR TEACHERS

Please rank the following priorities for teachers that your professional development program is trying to achieve in order of highest to lowest, with 1 being what you think should be the highest priority and 11 the lowest.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Increase ability to prepare students to meet state academic standards	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Improve classroom management skills	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	22.2%	5.6%	16.7%	11.1%	5.6%	27.8%
Improve classroom instructional strategies	22.2%	16.7%	11.1%	27.8%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	0..0%
Increase ability to engage students in discussions of controversial issues	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%	16.7%	16.7%	0.0%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Increase ability to design service-learning activities	5.6%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	27.8%	5.6%
Increase ability to engage students in simulation	5.6%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%	11.1%	11.1%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%
Increase ability to teach key facts, dates, and major events	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	5.6%	5.6%	22.2%	22.2%	5.6%	5.6%	27.8%
Increase students' understanding of the key principles of American government and improve knowledge of US history	27.8%	22.2%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	5.6%	11.1%	16.7%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Develop an appreciation or respect for America's constitutional heritage	11.1%	5.6%	16.7%	5.6%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	11.1%	16.7%	22.2%	5.6%
Increase ability to teach values like tolerance, equality, individual freedom, and limited government	0.0%	11.1%	5.6%	16.7%	16.7%	11.1%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	16.7%	5.6%
Increase ability to teach civic behaviors such as voting and community service	5.6%	0.0%	16.7%	22.2%	5.6%	5.6%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	16.7%

Source: Survey on Professional Development in Civic Education

PD activities intended to strengthen teachers' capacities to engage students in simulations of key civic ideas and skills; teach traditionally understood American democratic values such as tolerance, equality, individual freedom, and limited government; and develop and deepen their skills in instructing their students in civic behaviors such as voting and community service (table 2).

TABLE 3

RANKING CIVICS PD PROGRAMMING PRIORITIES FOR STUDENTS

Please rank the following priorities for students that your professional development program(s) is (are) trying to achieve in order of highest to lowest, with 1 being what you think should be the highest priority and 3 the lowest.

	1	2	3
To get students to be informed and thoughtful, have a grasp and an appreciation of history and the fundamental principles of American democracy, and have a capacity to discuss and deliberate about public issues.	77.8%	5.6%	26.7%
To get students to participate in their communities through membership in or contributions to organizations working to address an array of cultural, social, political, and religious interests and beliefs	5.6%	44.4%	50.0%
To get students to act politically by having the skills, knowledge, and commitment needed to accomplish public purposes such as group problem-solving, public speaking, petitioning and protesting, and voting	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%

Source: Survey on Professional Development in Civic Education

Civic Knowledge

PD programs take seriously the demands on civics teachers to develop within their students both knowledge of the foundations of the American political system and an understanding of how that system shapes the individual's role as a citizen. Increasing conceptual knowledge about government—its informing principles and resulting formal institutions—and knowledge about how to participate in that government as a citizen are the two most emphasized aims among the survey's responses, indicating that PD organizations find traditional elements of civic education to be at the core of civic knowledge. Drawing out the full implications of how and why the specific type of political order that exists in America relates to the type of opportunities that exist for participation in it, PD programs incorporate several familiar themes of representative government into their content, in addition to a few surprising ones.

On the familiar side of the equation, PD programs address the themes of constitutionalism and how (and whether) the government established by the Constitution embodies the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy. This naturally leads to the inclusion of content regarding the meaning and functioning of a representative democracy and the related subject of civil society, in addition to the subject of citizenship broadly speaking. In addition, considerations of the relationship between the political system and individual citizens do not exclude a treatment of economics: it is noteworthy that the market economy as a subject is also likely to figure into the civics content that PD programs develop with teachers (see table 4).

Moving away from the familiar and more traditional elements of civic education, PD programs are not likely to restrict their focus to a domestic treatment of American government and American civic life. High value is given to expanding knowledge about human rights as an integral part of civic education and also about viewing the role of the United States in the world—in its relations with other nations and its impact on world affairs. This suggests that today's civics teacher or student will have an incomplete civic education or background if he or she does not consider the American citizen within the context of a global scene.

TABLE 4
CIVIC KNOWLEDGE

Coordinators will go through each item below and identify if their professional development programs place no emphasis = 0, minor emphasis = 1, or major emphasis = 2 on each of the components. Identify how much emphasis your programs place on helping participants build student capacity in the following areas:

	0	1	2
Civics, politics, and government	5.9%	29.4%	64.7%
Foundations of the American political system	29.4%	5.9%	64.7%
How the government established by the Constitution embodies the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy	29.4%	11.8%	58.8%
The relationship of the United States to other nations and world affairs	23.5%	47.1%	29.4%
The roles of citizens in American democracy	6.3%	31.3%	62.5%
Representative democracy	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Citizenship	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Civil society	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Market economy	35.3%	58.8%	5.9%
Types of public issues	11.8%	41.2%	47.1%

Source: Survey on Professional Development in Civic Education

Civic Skills

The ability to think through issues and ideas and to articulate them clearly in a variety of social contexts lies at the heart of the civic skills that PD programs strategize to help teachers develop in their students. While a working knowledge of the principles and institutions of government is an essential element of a civic education, without the ability to evaluate and defend a variety of arguments both individually and within a group setting, students would be ill-equipped to participate fully in civic life. PD programs thus place the greatest emphasis on content that teachers can use in the classroom to foster the skills of organized deliberation. Students need their teachers to guide them through the tool kit, so to speak, of effective communication and implementation of their civic knowledge.

Learning how to organize and interpret information around specific issues, to separate relevant arguments from irrelevant opinions, to articulate clearly ideas and interests, and to take a position supported by the deliberative process are the topmost tools or civic skills to acquire from a civics teacher, and so PD programs prioritize these in their content for teacher development. Their second objective is to have teachers then expand their students' capacity to express their arguments—and defend them—in a social context. This includes the ability to work constructively with others to carry out ideas and debate them (table 5).

But PD programs are not simply interested in reinforcing the perception that working well with others requires a watering down of individuals' positions or arguments, or that it amounts to no more than a feel-good social exercise. It is noteworthy that PD organizations want teachers to work with their students on developing a willingness to defend their own position.

Teaching students to defend their analysis of the issues surrounding political and civic life does not

TABLE 5
CIVIC SKILLS

Coordinators will go through each item below and identify if their professional development programs place no emphasis = 0, minor emphasis = 1, or major emphasis = 2 on each of the components. Identify how much emphasis your programs place on helping participants build student capacity in the following areas:

	0	1	2
Work with others	11.8%	23.5%	64.7%
Clearly articulate ideas and interests	5.9%	23.5%	70.6%
Build coalitions	23.5%	35.3%	41.2%
Seek consensus	17.6%	35.3%	47.1%
Negotiate compromise	11.8%	41.2%	47.1%
Manage conflict	17.6%	41.2%	41.2%
Identify and describe political and civic life	5.9%	52.9%	41.2%
Analyze, synthesize, and explain political and civic life	5.9%	52.9%	41.2%
Evaluate, take, and defend positions on public issues	11.8%	23.5%	64.7%
Think critically and constructively about the conditions of civic and political life and how they may be improved	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Interact to promote common and personal interests	11.8%	47.1%	41.2%
Monitor public events and issues	11.8%	47.1%	41.2%
Deliberate about public issues	5.9%	23.5%	70.6%
Influence public policy decisions	17.6%	29.4%	52.9%
Implement public policy decisions	23.5%	41.2%	35.3%
Take action to improve civic life	17.6%	23.5%	58.8%
Organize and interpret information around a specific issue	5.9%	23.5%	70.6%
Elaborate their understanding of concepts through extended writing	11.8%	41.2%	47.1%
Consider alternative viewpoints	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Apply new information to new contexts	11.8%	41.2%	47.1%

Source: Survey on Professional Development in Civic Education

preclude the need for teachers to work with students on the effective use of their knowledge and their arguments in real life. The importance of civic deliberation rests in the end on the ability to influence public policy decisions, which is done in part through collaboration with others. PD programs thus round out their civics skills content for teachers by adding elements that explore how to improve students' ability to work effectively with others—through consensus building, compromise negotiation, and conflict management. Helping teachers help their students acquire these skills to take action to improve civic life is the result that PD organizations aim for in designing their program content regarding civic skills.

Civic Dispositions

PD organizations stress that civic knowledge and civic skills are two vital elements of civic education around which teachers ought to build their curriculum. But a civics curriculum would be incomplete if it did not also address civic dispositions—the fostering of attitudes and habits conducive to civic participation. Accordingly, PD for teachers incorporates content in its programming that is designed to promote an informed participation in civic affairs, a participation that is understood as the exercise primarily of certain civic responsibilities, rounded out by the exercise of rights.

In contrast to the understanding of active citizenship as the amalgam of skills and dispositions individuals need to go to college, advance in careers, and succeed in the real world—things like working hard, following rules, and punctuality—that is often referred to as "transactional" citizenship, PD programs structure their content to emphasize the greater importance of individuals carrying out the responsibilities of citizenship. This means that PD programs aim to help teachers pass on to their students the understanding of civic participation as a responsibility or privilege of membership within a specific political community.

Of course this does not preclude encouraging students to be on time, to work hard, and to follow rules: the responsibilities of the citizen cover personal, political, and economic areas, the latter of which are traditionally understood to mean voting in elections and paying taxes. But teachers (and PD programs) who promote the healthy functioning of American constitutional democracy as being dependent on the strength of individuals' civic participation also do remember to emphasize the importance of the civic exercise of rights.

PD programs encourage teachers to impart to their students a two-sided understanding of civic rights—both that individuals in a representative democracy have rights that they should not be prevented from exercising, and also that individuals must be respectful and even protective of the rights possessed equally by each person. This respect is crucial for the smooth operation of American democracy because it informs the practice of self-government by supporting the central role of the consent of the governed.

PD programs incorporate these themes into their content on desirable civic dispositions, and they also include a subtheme of global human rights to explore with their students. This is a noteworthy finding because PD programs are more likely to emphasize the importance of respecting and affirming the common and equal humanity, worth, and dignity of each person (not just fellow citizens) than they are to drill down into the specific meaning or implications of something like supporting the consent of the governed—that it amounts to accepting the decisions of majority rule while protecting the rights of minorities, for instance (table 6).

PD programs take seriously the need for teachers to cultivate civic dispositions among their students as a requirement for high-quality civic education. But even while they emphasize attitudes that are conducive to helping students become self-sufficient, independent members of society as a requirement of a healthy, functioning democracy, what remains unaddressed by this survey is how or whether the civic dispositions that are encouraged coalesce into a broader sense of attachment to the American polity—at one time a primary goal of civic education but, like civics altogether, a much-reduced concern for educators today.

Pedagogy

To help the teachers be more successful in the classroom, civics PD programs identify various techniques—or practices—to emphasize in their presentations. Overall, there is much less uniformity across organizations in regards to which techniques or practices are most beneficial to emphasize than there is in identifying, for instance, key civic dispositions to encourage.

PD coordinators answering the survey indicated that nearly two-thirds of PD organizations believe that helping teachers develop their own skills in using questions as the basis for organizing civic curriculum is of utmost importance. Of equal importance to PD coordinators is imparting to teachers the ability to see and explain the conflicts or interactions among fundamental principles inherent in current policy disputes or past issues of historical note. Organizations are also

TABLE 6
CIVIC DISPOSITIONS

Coordinators will go through each item below and identify if their professional development programs place no emphasis = 0, minor emphasis = 1, or major emphasis = 2 on each of the components. Identify how much emphasis your programs place on helping participants build student capacity in the following areas:

	0	1	2
Becomes a self-sufficient, independent member of society	5.9%	29.4%	64.7%
Respects individual worth and human dignity	5.9%	41.2%	52.9%
Assumes the personal, political, and economic responsibilities of a citizen	5.9%	17.6%	76.5%
Accepts legitimate decisions of majority rule	11.8%	41.2%	47.1%
Protects the rights of minorities	5.9%	47.1%	47.1%
Participates in civic affairs in an informed, thoughtful, and effective manner	5.9%	17.6%	76.5%
Promotes the healthy functioning of American constitutional democracy	5.9%	23.5%	70.6%
Affirms the common and equal humanity and dignity of each person	5.9%	52.9%	41.2%
Respects, protects, and exercises the rights possessed equally by each person	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Practices self-government	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Supports the consent of the governed	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%
Exemplifies moral civic virtue	11.8%	35.3%	52.9%
Promotes the common good	6.3%	31.3%	62.5%

Source: Survey of Professional Development in Civic Education

committed to using and encouraging the use of primary texts. Using case studies and stressing multicultural service learning are generally seen as secondary techniques to coach teachers on. Notably, organizations are nearly evenly split on if and how they emphasize integrating structured academic controversy and connecting core concepts to issues that are meaningful to K–12 students into the skill sets that they work on with participating teachers.

How do the PD programs themselves convey all of this content in addition to the skill sets needed for classroom instruction? PD providers resemble each other most closely in their use of primary sources. Books, newspapers, and online and print magazines are a more distant second tool that organizations emphasize for use in their content offerings (table 7). They are more agreed, however, in sharing a minor emphasis on using secondary sources; maps, charts, or graphs; and computer programs, social media, and films as means to instruct participating teachers further in their profession. And it is of little surprise, but still remarkable, that a majority of organizations make absolutely no use of social studies textbooks or online games as part of their program offerings.

At the end of the day, in terms of pedagogy, PD programs are overwhelmingly concerned with aiding their program participants to incorporate discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events within the context of the civics classroom and, in particular, to draw on events that young people view

TABLE 7

CONVEYING CONTENT: RESOURCES CIVICS PD PROGRAMS USE

How often do you use the following resources as part of your professional development programs? Coordinators will go through each item below and identify if their professional development programs place no emphasis = 0, minor emphasis = 1, or major emphasis = 2 on each of the components.

	0	1	2
Social studies textbooks	58.8%	29.4%	11.8%
Books, newspapers, magazines (print and online)	17.6%	41.2%	41.2%
Primary sources	5.9%	23.5%	70.6%
Secondary sources	5.9%	64.7%	29.4%
Quantitative data (such as maps, charts, or graphs)	5.9%	58.8%	35.3%
Computer programs	29.4%	64.7%	5.9%
Online games	52.9%	47.1%	0.0%
Social media	35.3%	52.9%	11.8%
Films/videos	23.5%	52.9%	23.5%
Materials from other subject areas	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%

Source: Survey of Professional Development in Civic Education

as important to their lives for a larger constructive conversation on the range and importance of civic awareness. And while PD programs are also concerned with helping teachers design and implement programs that act as a bridge between what students learn through performing community service and what they learn through the formal curriculum and classroom instruction, not quite half of programs place as strong an emphasis on that latter goal. Although PD programs do not neglect the value of teacher-led student activities that directly involve the students in community life apart from their classroom—almost 30 percent of surveyed organization strive to help their participants design and implement school and community service activities for their students to participate in—PD typically places a greater emphasis on helping teachers increase student engagement with the learning *within* their classroom.

Opportunities

Put simply, democracy requires well-informed citizens with the habits and mind-set required to maintain a free society. Teachers are key to the effort of establishing those habits of heart and mind on which vigorous democracies rely, but teachers' efficacy and impact depend on the relevant skills, experience, and knowledge they can command in the classroom. Teachers benefit from exposure to those PD opportunities that refresh and augment their knowledge and skills, in turn positively impacting the classroom experience and learning outcomes of students. For civics teachers, PD in their field is doubly important because of the sheer breadth of the civic education field and the wide variety of subjects and topics it includes.

Surveying existing civics PD providers to compose the portrait of their institutional organization, and the structural components and processes of their PD programs, enables researchers, the entities themselves, and funders to identify not just proven successful elements of civics PD, but also to uncover the gaps and opportunities for improvement.

For Organizations

It is hardly a secret that civic education as a whole has been given less attention in recent decades by the education establishment. It comes as no surprise then that civics PD has been adversely affected as well. This is apparent in the decline in the number and frequency of civics PD programs available to civics educators and in the overall lack of funding that is made available both for teachers to attend PD and also for the PD providers to keep their doors open.

Survey respondents were nearly unanimous in linking current problems to the general lack of resources and funding available to them. If they could avail themselves of additional support, PD providers write that their first order of business would be to offer more professional development to more teachers. They would like to be able to offer more scholarships and incentives to participants, and they would also like to multiply the amount and length of their PD offerings. Numerous organizations expressed the desire to create specific programs tailored to a teacher's level of civic education literacy, enabling teachers to continue to deepen their knowledge and classroom skills, rather than just offering them refresher courses.

In addition to increasing, diversifying, and deepening existing PD opportunities, PD providers reported that additional resources would enable them to build out their ability to coach teachers on a more individualized basis, as well as to develop tools for more effective measurement of the classroom impact of their work with teachers. Crafting long-term assessment systems of their offerings is seen as a highly desirable project in which to invest.

PD providers feel that these prospective opportunities, however, will be tenuous without buy-in from school districts and community leaders. This points to the more systemic disadvantage they face: too many teachers, in their estimation, struggle to do "high-end instruction" in civics, in part because the relatively small number of teachers in the field are often tasked with covering multiple of the social studies either within the rubric of "civics" or in stand-alone courses. As a result, teachers often lack the time to try new ideas and classroom techniques and to engage in the professional exchange of ideas. PD providers struggle to help teachers in this regard—a problem compounded by a decline in the role and even the position of social studies department chairs in schools and districts.

Due in part to the relatively small number of PD organizations currently operating in relation to the

extensive sweep of subjects covered under the civics umbrella, the providers are not often able to offer more than broad or general civics-related programming. Providers themselves identify this as a "gap" in the field. In tandem with the need to deepen program content is the need to stay abreast of the research on best instructional strategies. In short, PD providers acknowledge that developing and implementing a system of best practices for civics PD is key to fulfilling their central underlying purpose.

In revealing the gaps that PD providers themselves feel exist in their field at both the institutional and also the individual program level, the larger portrait of civics PD practices shows the flipside of identifiable strengths. While the fields of civic education and civics PD arguably struggle because of a lack of interest on the part of education leaders and policymakers and a lack of funding, PD is sustained because of the commitment of civics educators, scholars, and foundation directors to the cause of civic education itself. In other words, these organizations and their staff are examples of civic engagement.

For Funders

Lack of resources does not allow the civics PD programs to invest the time and personnel in diversifying programs and developing more advanced content, much less in commissioning studies that track the effectiveness of their current practices. Accordingly, funders and supporters of PD have the opportunity to make a positive and long-lasting impact at both the institutional and research level. Support for commissioning both long- and short-term impact studies of individual PD providers would enable providers as well as teachers to measure the relative effectiveness of particular sets of content, exercises, and activities to develop and implement a set of best practices for the field in general and for subsets of civic education in particular.

To conclude, what this portrait of civics PD organizations reveals is that while existing PD organizations do much with little, any additions to current resources are likely to have far-reaching benefits that would stretch much further than simply keeping the lights on and doors open of these committed organizations and programs.

Notes

1. Steve Farkas and Ann M. Duffett, *High Schools, Civics, and Citizenship: What Social Studies Teachers Think and Do*, AEI Program on American Citizenship, September 2010.

2. Cynthia Gibson et al., *The Civic Mission of Schools*, 2003, www.civicyouth.org/special-report-the-civic-mission-of-schools/.

3. AEI Program on American Citizenship, "Survey on Professional Development in Civic Education," 2011.

4. Michael S. Garet et al., "What Makes Professional Development Effective? Results from a National Sample of Teachers," *American Education Research Journal* 38, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 915–45.

5. The federally funded Teaching American History Grant Program sponsored some research on specific programs in history, and there have been an additional handful of small, narrowly focused, civics-specific studies conducted. However, no large-scale studies have been completed.

6. *The Founders' Constitution*, Vol. 1, Ch. 18, Document 35 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch18s35.html.

7. M. S. Branson, "Education for Informed, Effective, and Committed Democratic Citizenship" (keynote address presented at the Workshop Education Youth for Active Citizenship, Malaysian Citizenship Initiative, and the Center for Civic Education, December 11–13, 2004).

8. Cicero, *De Officiis*, 53, www.constitution.org/rom/de_officiis.htm.

9. Gibson et al., *The Civic Mission of Schools*.

10. Thomas Jefferson et al., "Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Fix the Site of the University of Virginia," *The Founders' Constitution*, Vol. 1, Ch. 18, Document 33, http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch18s33.html.

11. National Staff Development Council, *Professional Learning for Student Results: What Works and How We Make It Happen*, annual report, 2009–10.

12. Eleonora Villegas-Reimers reinforces this argument in her authoritative study. See Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, *Teacher Professional Development: An International Review of the Literature*, UNESCO, 2003.

13. "Professional development programs are efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes, beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students," writes Thomas R. Guskey. See Thomas R. Guskey, "Professional Development and Teacher Change," *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 8, no. 3 (2002): 381–91. For research demonstrating the unclear connections between PD and student achievement, see Thomas R. Guskey and Michael Huberman, *Professional Development in Education: New Paradigms and Practices* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995); and K. Loschert, "Teachers and ESPs Speak Up about Their Professional Development Needs," *NEA Today* 22, no. 1 (September 2003): 33. For research indicating common elements of high-quality PD that lead to improved teaching and learning, see Douglas Fisher, "The Missing Link: Standards, Assessment, and Instruction," *Voices from the Middle* 13, no. 2 (December 2005); Douglas Huffman, Kelli Thomas, and Frances Lawrenz, "Relationship between Professional Development, Teachers' Instructional Practices, and the Achievement of Students in Science and Mathematics," *School Science and Mathematics* 103, no. 8 (December 2003): 378–87; and B. Keith Lenz, "Creating School-Wide Conditions for High-Quality Learning Strategy Classroom Instruction," *Intervention in School and Clinic* 41, no. 5 (May 2006): 261–66.

14. Michael Garet et al., *Designing Effective Professional Development: Lessons from the Eisenhower Program* (Washington, DC: US Department of Education, 1999).

15. Susan Loucks-Horsley et al., *Designing Professional Development for Teachers of Science and Mathematics* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2009).

16. Ibid. "Duration" is the length of the connected experience, supporting teachers while they implement in their classrooms. "Participation" is the allowing of teachers opportunities

to work with colleagues. Common processes identified by the research were a focus on content, active learning, and coherence. A focus on content allows teachers the ability to deepen their own knowledge and skills to change their instructional practices and meet the needs of all learners. Active learning allows teachers to engage in similar processes they need to use in the classroom to impact student learning. See also D. Cohen and C. Hill, "Instructional Policy and Classroom Performance: The Mathematics Reform in California," *Teachers College Record* 102, no. 2 (February 2000): 294–343; and A. Lieberman, "Networks as Learning Communities: Shaping the Future of Teacher Development," *Journal of Teacher Education* 51, no. 3 (2000): 221–27.

17. Jonathan Gould, ed., *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools*, Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania and the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, September 2011, www.civicmissionofschools.org/the-campaign/guardian-of-democracy-report.

18. Ibid.

19. Cohen and Hill, "Instructional Policy and Classroom Performance."

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