

## IL Civics Education Requirement and Social Science Standards

On August 21, 2015, Governor Rauner signed House Bill (HB) 4025 into law, requiring that all high school students in Illinois complete a semester-long course in civics.

In addition to aligning with Learning Standards for Social Science, civics courses are to include:

- Discussion of current and controversial issues
- Service learning
- Simulations of the democratic process

The service learning component of the law has consistently been identified as a fundamental implementation gap. The EYPC program seeks to fill this gap through valuable, hands-on experience within and outside of the classroom. The purpose of EYPC is to educate young people in a way that engages them in their community and gives them the skills, confidence, and experience necessary to make a difference.

According to Section 27-22 of the Illinois School Code, civic education is to *“help young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives.”* Similarly, one of the primary goals of the Illinois Social Science Learning Standards is *“for Illinois students to not just acquire and produce knowledge but also to live a life of action – to engage in the workings of our democracy.”* This vision is at the heart of EYPC.

The tables below show a side-by-side comparison of various EYPC activities and the corresponding Illinois Social Science Learning Standards that they fulfill. For questions about learning standards or classroom implementation of EYPC, contact Scott Hays at [sphays@illinois.edu](mailto:sphays@illinois.edu).

## Inquiry Standards

**Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence** Through the process of designing, analyzing, and applying different data collection methods, youth gain a better understanding of how credible data is collected and used, as well as its importance in shaping and evaluating public policy.

EYPC Activities	Middle School Standards	High School Standards
Students will learn about data collection methods and match them to the appropriate community stakeholders to get the information they need to advocate for their issue (Activity 3.2: <i>Taking Stock</i> ). They will make direct observations, conduct interviews, and survey the community (3.4-3.6). Finally, they will analyze the data (3.7) and present their findings (3.8).	<b>SS.IS.4.6-8.MC:</b> Gather relevant information from credible sources and determine whether they support each other.	<b>SS.IS.4.9-12:</b> Gather and evaluate information from multiple sources while considering the origin, credibility, point of view, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources.
Students will learn about the importance of and principles of objective, representative data (3.1: <i>Trustworthy Data</i> ). Students will research existing data, discuss the quality of the data and what they can conclude from it, and identify research gaps (3.3)	<b>SS.IS.5.6-8.MdC:</b> Identify evidence from multiple sources to support claims, noting its limitations.	<b>SS.IS.5.9-12:</b> Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to revise or strengthen claims.

**Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action** EYPC participants will identify a problem, define meaningful solutions they can help to implement, and work to enact them. Through conversations with their peers, adult facilitators, community members, stakeholders, and decision-makers, participants will adapt their argument to a variety of settings and audiences.

EYPC Activities	Middle School Standards	High School Standards
In Activity 1.2: <i>Advocating for Our Policy</i> , students learn about a problem in their community and how a proposed policy will address the problem. They will learn about key parts of the proposed ordinance and how they will affect the community (1.5). The students will also hear from a policy advocate or community organizer about some of the challenges they have faced in addressing the issue (1.7).	<b>SS.IS.8.6-8.LC:</b> Analyze how a problem can manifest itself and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address it.	<b>SS.IS.8.9-12:</b> Use interdisciplinary lenses to analyze the causes and effects of and identify solutions to <b>local</b> , regional, or global concerns.
In Activity 1.6: <i>Policy Debate</i> , students will develop support and counterarguments for their proposed policy. In debating the issue, they will critically analyze the credibility of the arguments and where the opposition might object.	<b>SS.IS.7.6-8:</b> Critique the structure and credibility of arguments and explanations (self and others).	<b>SS.IS.6.9-12:</b> Construct and evaluate explanations and arguments using multiple sources and relevant, verified information.
Students will summarize their data and present their findings using text, tables, and graphs (3.8). They will learn about the structure of advocacy messages and work to develop their own (4.1). They will spread the word about their work, using a variety of means to engage the community (4.4). Finally, the students will work in teams to coordinate the different parts of their presentation (4.3) and deliver it to decision-makers.	<b>SS.IS.6.6-8.MC:</b> Present arguments and explanations that would appeal to audiences and venues outside the classroom using a variety of media.	<b>SS.IS.7.9-12:</b> Articulate explanations and arguments to a targeted audience in diverse settings.

## Civics Standards

**Civic and Political Institutions** EYPC participants will gain a better understanding of civic and political institutions by interacting with them first-hand to enact change. They will discuss the importance of government in shaping everyday life and their role and value as citizens in contributing to that process.

EYPC Activities	Middle School Standards	High School Standards
In Activity 1.4: <i>What Good Is Government?</i> , students will learn how the government affects their everyday life. They will observe a city council meeting (2.4) and meet with a city council member (2.5) to learn how they can impact the decision-making process. They will also study the structure of their local government (2.2) and map their city representatives (2.1) to better understand how they are represented.	<b>SS.CV.1.6-8.MC:</b> Evaluate the powers and responsibilities of citizens, political parties, interest groups, and the media.	<b>SS.CV.1.9-12:</b> Distinguish the rights, roles, powers and responsibilities of individuals and institutions in the political system.

**Participation and Deliberation: Applying Civic Virtues and Democratic Principles** The students will meet and form valuable relationships with city councilors and other community leaders and organizers. They will learn about the diversity of perspectives related to the policy they have chosen and how those preferences translate into outcomes.

EYPC Activities	Middle School Standards	High School Standards
The students will have the opportunity to interact with a local policy advocate or community organizer (1.7), stakeholders (3.5), and community members (3.6) to understand their interests and perspectives. They will also engage the community through various media channels (4.4).	<b>SS.CV.4.6-8.LC:</b> Explain the connection between interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when addressing issues in government and society.	<b>SS.CV.6.9-12:</b> Describe how political parties, the media, and public interest groups both influence and reflect social and political interests.

**Rules, Processes, and Laws** EYPC participants will learn first-hand about the structure of local government and the process by which ordinances become law. After researching and debating the effects of policies themselves, the students will engage in the legislative process.

EYPC Activities	Middle School Standards	High School Standards
In Activity 1.5, students will learn in depth about the proposed ordinance. They will study the different parts of it, how it is enforced, and the affect that it will have on the community. Most importantly, they will have the opportunity to propose the ordinance themselves.	<b>SS.CV.6.6-8.LC:</b> Determine whether specific rules and laws (both actual and proposed) resolve the problems they were meant to address.	<b>SS.CV.8.9-12:</b> Analyze how individuals use and challenge laws to address a variety of public issues.
Through debating the issue they have chosen, students will critically analyze the policy through multiple perspectives and consider the unintended outcomes and costs to stakeholders that the policy may create (1.6).	<b>SS.CV.5.6-8.MdC:</b> Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in historic and contemporary settings.	<b>SS.CV.9.9-12:</b> Evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended outcomes and related consequences.
By participating in an “Ordinance Adoption Game” (2.3), students will gain a better understanding of the procedures and processes important for passage of an ordinance. They will learn in this game and through interacting with decision-makers themselves how to influence them and when to compromise.	<b>SS.CV.6.6-8.MC:</b> Develop procedures for making decisions in historic and contemporary settings (such as the school, civil society, or local, state or national government).	<b>SS.CV.10.9-12:</b> Explain the role of compromise and deliberation in the legislative process.