
Special Community of Practice *Practitioner* 11/2/20

Being Ready After the Election to Help Students Process the Outcomes

In response to the special Community of Practice *Practitioner* we sent last week asking for resources related to students emotional concerns about the election, we received this response from a faculty member at Tufts.

"Thanks for reaching out. ... We work very closely with an expert teacher from West Chicago- Mary Ellen Daneels, who put together [a] resource on the IllinoisCivics blog ...:

<https://illinoiscivics.blogspot.com/2020/10/where-do-we-go-from-here-resources-to.html>

I think you'll find this particularly helpful right after election for having such discussions and I would encourage the district to have these discussions regardless of outcomes to help students both process and learn how to have such discussions with their peers and friends."

Center note: While the emphasis is on civics, we certainly can see how this related to addressing students' emotional reactions.

Excerpt from the resource: *Where Do We Go from Here?*

While the 2020 election season draws to a close, IllinoisCivics.org is committed to helping classrooms prepare for what comes next after a contentious and polarized election season. Students will need help processing the election results and their impact on current and societal issues their communities face around justice, power, equity, and safety.

As all educators are civics teachers, we have a responsibility to prioritize our students' lived experiences, putting Maslow before Bloom, to inform the essential questions we address in our curriculum. Educators will not have all of the answers to the questions students pose, but we can create a classroom space where we can be present, listen, and create a safe environment for our students to do the same.

Resources to Help Classrooms Process the 2020 Election

Here are a number of ideas and resources to support this work beyond the 2020 election.

Start with reflection – Your students may be wrestling with a range of emotions post-election. We cannot assume what students are feeling or their perceptions of the election results. The tools below can be used to “check-in” and see where students are at. After using the tool that works for you, collect student responses, and display them in a chart or word cloud. Discuss the patterns, trends, and outliers to build empathy and awareness of self and others in the class. Engage students in a proactive conversation about what can be done to address past issues and the question— Where do we go from here?...

Revisit norms for discussion – One of the essential questions tackled in any classroom is, “How should we live together?” Revisit your classroom norms for discussion. What does productive dialogue look like, feel like, and sound like? If you are looking for tools to help to recalibrate or establish these norms. Here are a few... (Go to the site for links)

Have a Structure for Your Conversation – Great classroom discussions like great lesson plans, rarely “happen.” They take time and intention. Here are a few strategies you might think about employing to help students share their reflections and address the essential question, “Where do we go from here?”...

Words Matter – Classrooms often work to simulate the “real world” for students. However, much of the debate happening outside of the classroom is hyperbolic, misinformed, and often hurtful. Explicitly teaching and modeling “how we should live together” in the classroom is an important step to building “a more perfect union” outside of the classroom....

Model Media Literacy – Speculation and rumors may abound post-election day, especially if final results are delayed. You and your students do not have to navigate the information landscape alone....

This is NOT a “One and Done” Lesson Plan – These conversations will be ongoing. There are several civic learning providers who are creating space for educators to process, learn, and share resources....”

Listserv Participants: *Let us know what you have planned and what you need during this emotional election week?*

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