The Curriculum: Civics for All and Mock Elections in SPS

Overview:

For the 2020 to 2024 SPS Pilot, the curriculum for the average 5 day, Monday through Friday unit in October on mock elections is simple, efficient, and scalable.

While academic freedom and instructional creativity geared to given students should provide for different teachers to cover the material in different ways, the basic, standard protocol for a mock election voter education unit is below under: "The Five Day Mock Election Curriculum."

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Overview: By grade

1) Grade K-5 Elementary Schools have a distinct curriculum based on:
   a. K-2: iCivics foundations along with local issues in the classroom, the schoolhouse, and the neighborhood/community;
   b. 3rd grade: *Since Time Immemorial* curriculum, with proposed emphasis on voting/elections
   c. 4th and 5th grade*: a mix of "real" voting ballot measures and races and occasional/optional "proposed" school/community chosen topics/measures (see below – "Elementary Schools (K-5) Menu")
2) Grade 6-12 Middle and High Schools have a distinct curriculum based on a mix of "real" voting ballot measures and races and occasional/optional "proposed" school/community chosen topics/measures

Overview: By Voting Menus of Annual Major Races

3) Elementary Schools (K-5) Menu:
   a. Presidential race each 4 years; 2020, 2024, 2028, etc. for all K-5 students
   b. Seattle Mayor, each 4 years; 2021, 2025, 2029, etc. for all K-5 students
   c. Intervening years (2022, 2023)
      i. Grades: K – 2, iCivics and voting on a variety of options/items:
         1. classroom protocols, rules
         2. classroom/ASB leaders
         3. school issues: lunch, recess, gym activities, etc.
         4. Favorite animals! Why not for kindergartners?!
      ii. Grades 4 and 5, voting on similar issues to K-3, plus more complex issues:
         5. community/neighborhood issues
4) Secondary Schools (gr. 6-12) Menu:
   A) Even Years
      a. Presidential race each 4 years; 2020, 2024, 2028, etc.
      b. State legislative races – in even years
      c. Congressional races – in even years

B) Odd years
   a. Seattle Mayor, each 4 years; 2021, 2025, 2029, etc.
   b. City Council Races every 2 years, alternating 4 year terms, 2019, 2021, 2023, etc.
   c. School Board Races, every 2 years, alternating 4 year terms, 2019, 2021, 2023, etc
C) Every Year
   a. Various Initiative and Referendum Measures each year

5 Year Pilot: Overview of Each Year of K-12 "Mock Elections" in 2020 – 2024

2020 –
Grades K- 2 – iCivics

Grade 3 – Since Time Immemorial – From STI website (emphasis on voting structures) or Storypath Celilo Falls PDF

Grades 4-5 – vote in presidential election

Grade 6 – 7 - 8 - vote in presidential election, study Elections in America Student Workbook, iCivics, $ 9.99

Grade 9-12 - vote in presidential election, plus other races/initiative measures as student interest provides

2021 –
Grades K- 2 – iCivics

Grade 3 – Since Time Immemorial – From STI website (emphasis on voting structures) or Storypath Celilo Falls PDF

Grades 4-5 – vote in mayoral election

Grade 6 – 7 - 8 - vote in mayoral election, study Elections in America Student Workbook, iCivics, $ 9.99

Grade 9-12 - vote in mayoral election, plus other races/initiative measures as student interest provides

2022 –
Grades K -2 – iCivics

Grade   3 – Since Time Immemorial – From STI website (emphasis on voting structures) or Storypath Celilo Falls PDF

Grade 4 - Vote on Initiative measures and or legislative/Congressional race (s) as student interest provides

Grade 5   - Storypath – The Election Book – Form Your Own Parties - $4.59 a copy

Grade 6 -7 – 8 - Vote on Initiative measures and or legislative/Congressional race (s) as student interest provides ,
        study Elections in America Student Workbook, iCivics, $ 9.99

Grade 9-12 - Vote on Initiative measures and or legislative/Congressional race (s) as student interest provides

2023
Grades K -2 – iCivics

Grade   3 – Since Time Immemorial – From STI website (emphasis on voting structures) or Storypath Celilo Falls PDF

Grade 4 - Vote on City Council, School Board, and/or Initiative measures as student interest provides

Grade 5   - Storypath – The Election Book – Form Your Own Parties - $4.59 a copy

Grade 6 -7 – 8 - Vote on City Council, School Board, and/or Initiative measures as student interest provides
        study Elections in America Student Workbook, iCivics, $ 9.99

Grade 9 -12 - Vote on City Council, School Board, and/or Initiative measures as student interest provides

2024
Grades K- 2 – iCivics

Grade 3 – Since Time Immemorial – From STI website (emphasis on voting structures) or Storypath Celilo Falls PDF

Grades 4-5 – vote in presidential election

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"The Five Day Mock Election Curriculum"
- for secondary schools' social studies classes (gr.6-12)

1) **Day One**
   a. **Framing the larger political landscape/context**
      i. Teacher introduces the race/candidates/measures to be voted upon
      ii. Teacher reviews where and how the race/candidates/measure fits within the standard matrix of school, <u>local</u>, state, and federal <u>government structures</u>
      iii. Teacher identifies the core issues that the race/candidates/measure will be focused upon, i.e. homelessness in this fall's City Council races and budget allocation in this fall's School Board races
      iv. Preview student voter pamphlet, relevant sections

2) **Day Two**
   a. **Framing the race/candidates/measures**
      i. Students read, annotate, discuss, and summarize non-partisan information about the race/candidates/measures to be voted upon
         - Sources: King County Voter's Pamphlets, which includes race/measure background, funding etc. from Ballotpedia of WA, Seattle Municipal League
   b. **Framing the Debate:** Identifying the Issues and Points of Contention between opposing sides
      ii. Students read, annotate, and summarize *partisan* **information for and against** the race/candidates/measures to be voted upon
         - Sources: King County Voter's Pamphlets, Ballotpedia of WA, Municipal League
   c. **Discussion and Discourse:** Developing a shared understanding, and honest disagreements, about the race/candidates/measures to be voted upon
   d. **Teacher review of the basics** to make sure all students are familiar with what they will be voting on and the issues involved

3) **Day Three**
   a. **Media Literacy**
      i. Students are instructed about and review voting information, including TV and print advertisements, within their appropriate grade bands from the Civics for All <u>Media Literacy 101</u> tenets, including identifying <u>political bias</u> via the class political spectrum poster in op-eds, columns, articles, advertisements, etc.
         1. Online sources: <u>Checkology</u> from the News Literacy Project, <u>Teaching Tolerance: Digital and Civic Literacy Skills</u>, <u>Web Literacy For Student Fact Checkers</u>, Stanford's <u>Civic Online Reasoning Assessments</u>, etc.
         2. Print sources: KUOW, Seattle Times, the Stranger, TV advertisements, etc.

4) **Day Four**
   a. **Project Based Learning** with emphasis on respectful discourse over complex issues
      i. Begin interactive lessons/discourse/debates begin looking at the pros and cons
         - Interactive lessons/discourse/debates – Activities options:
            i. Make promo videos for your assigned "side"
            ii. Make respectful, negative attack videos against the other "side"
            iii. Stage a formal debate between sides
            iv. Write op-eds for or against a "side"
            v. Do SACs (<u>Structured Academic Controversy</u>) in small groups
            vi. Make editorial cartoons for and against a "side"
            vii. Write letters to candidates, stakeholders
            viii. Etc.

b. <u>Community Engagement</u>
        i. <u>Homework: Parent Interview Assignment</u> – a very popular exercise! Students review the issues/races with their parents and often change their opinions!
        ii. <u>Voter registration competitions!</u>

  5) **Day Five**
      a. **Project Based Learning continues**
      b. **Evaluation and Reflection –** students write up a half page summary of their learning and fill in their practice ballot so they know exactly how they are going to vote on Election Day

ELECTION DAY!!! **Students vote on paper ballots (and online if feasible) and deposit them in a ballot box at a school designated "polling place" and also vote online via Schoology!**

Time Allotment: 3-10 class periods

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"The Five Day Mock Election Curriculum"
- for elementary schools' social studies periods (grades K-5)
Note: In presidential (2020, 2024, 2028, et.) and mayoral election (2021, 2025, 2029, etc.) **years the elementary curriculum should roughly mirror the above, secondary "The Five Day Mock Election Curriculum"**

Curriculum guide for non-presidential/non-mayoral election years
  1) **Day One**
      a. **Discuss/choose possible voting issues/topics**
      b. **Discuss core democratic values in voting: equity, access, tolerance, majority rule – minority rights, accepting defeat gracefully, etc.**
      c. **Design ballots**
      d. **Framing the larger political landscape/context**
          i. Teacher introduces the race/candidates/measures to be voted upon
          ii. Teacher reviews where and how the race/candidates/measure fits within the standard matrix of school, <u>local</u>, state, and federal <u>government structures</u>
          iii. Teacher identifies the core issues that the race/candidates/measure will be focused upon, i.e. homelessness in this fall's City Council races and budget allocation in this fall's School Board races
          iv. Preview student voter pamphlet, relevant sections
  2) **Day Two**
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Materials Sources and Curriculum Guides:

For secondary grade 6-12 students
Ballots:
King County Elections

Voting Information/Sources:
Student Voter Pamphlets for all grade 6-12 students

King County Student Voter's Guides – All in one pamphlets with teacher guides, parent interview assignments, etc.
Ballotpedia of Washington – A superlative, non-partisan information source for student voter pamphlets for all elections
Other Voting Information/Sources
Washington Secretary of State (SOS) Mock Elections Teacher Resources
The Municipal League Foundation of Seattle
The Seattle Times
KUOW

Information below is ancillary / for implementation considerations

Preparation time to vote:

Different teachers will take different amounts of time to vote: some might take just a few days to review the issues/races in September, October, or early November while others might take a week or up more to prepare students to vote.

Age - appropriate voting:

Grades K-5 - mock elections are less tied to real elections and are more hands on. For example, K-2 students might vote on their favorite animals and learn about their status in the wild, while grades 3 and 4 may look at more conceptual topics like how democracy affects their every day lives and households, as per the KidsVotingUSA curricula.
Grades 6 - 12 - students can begin to tackle real time election issues, often by being given assignments to engage their parents in the learning.

Choosing Topics/Races to Vote on:

Schools (in particular social studies departments) can choose the number or type of topics they want their students to learn about and vote on. Materials for a broad range of "real-time" topics as well as proposed legislation would be made available to all via the state/city voter's guides as well as materials loaded onto the district website so teachers can share / use materials without reinventing the wheel from school to school, etc. In major elections such as presidential races and mayoral races it would be understood that most if not all schools would vote on those topics, again, using shared materials for efficacy and expediency. K- 4 voting would be with age appropriate materials – see below.

2 types of Voting

1) Voting on "real" state initiatives, legislative races, congressional races, mayoral races, school board races, and, of course, presidential races

2) Voting on proposed legislation/initiatives such as: examples - gun control measures proposed after the Parkland Massacre, the "head tax," state income tax, proposed luxury car tax initiative, etc.

Paper and/or Online Balloting: A few fundamental questions/options to consider in doing mock elections themselves:

1) What are the various advantages and disadvantages of using different types of voting:
a) voting on paper ballots in classrooms or in mock voting booths on the day of the elections
b) voting online with the state website by scheduling library time for computer access prior to election day
c) voting on Schoology (the district student/teacher/family communication medium), or other method

Brief Notes on the actual voting process and options:
a) Paper ballots (either "real" from King County Elections or downloadable from the district civics webpage) offer many advantages, including they are tactile and "real" to students, collecting them and counting them offers great opportunities for student engagement and community participation as "elections officials," the results for your school

are known quickly, etc. builds the CIVIC EXPEREINCE: kids students get the tactile experience of using the ballot, of putting their signature on the envelope/ballot; kids can vote en masse across the school in home – room, a designated period, or in their SS classes; also – I was told a few years ago by SOS that we could send them our ballot tallies to them for inclusion in their data bases

b) Online voting has its merits but requires voting more than a week before the election, is not tactile and as "real" as paper balloting, and, very importantly, the Secretary of State's system does not offer school by school returns information which detracts from the school community experience and hampers the accumulation of data - i.e. voter participation rates - from school to school - this data is essential to building competitions between schools for "voter participation rates"

c) Voting on Schoology in classrooms has many potential variables and could be useful in grades 6-12 perhaps

In voting a balance needs to be found between school/teacher/student preference and the need to have some measure of uniformity for expediency's sake, including voter participation competitions between schools!

Supplemental Mock elections websites/curricular models / resources:

1) https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/mock-election/#/landing - WA State

2) https://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/mock-election - Sandra Day O'Connor's organization

3) http://www.youthleadership.net/learning-programs/mock-election/ - University of Virginia's superlative materials

4) http://www.nationalstudentparentmockelection.org/ - Includes parent engagement option

5) https://www.nonprofitvote.org/partners/kids-voting-usa/ - KidsVotingUSA K-12

6)https://www.socialstudies.com/c/product.web?nocache@4+s@GDInFNk44UzTw+record@TF144037+Title@ELECTIONS+ISBN@9781575966205 Presidential Elections from Storypath, from Seattle University