

Recommendations from the North Carolina Civic Health Index 2010

Democracy in Action: Strengthening Civic Life in North Carolina

Individually, we can contribute to our state's civic health by keeping up with current events and discussing them with friends and family; casting informed votes in all elections; volunteering time, whether it be minutes, hours, or days; forming and maintaining connections with families, friends, and neighbors; and taking on leadership roles in our communities.

Key individuals and institutions have additional responsibilities to ensure that North Carolina's residents are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to participate in and contribute to civic life.

POLICYMAKERS CAN:

- Continue to explore creative means of supporting informed participation in all of North Carolina's elections.
- Ensure that our state's young people are learning about government (federal, state, and local) and civics in the classroom and that teachers have resources to teach these subjects effectively.
- Recruit and mentor a diverse group of leaders who represent the varying interests of our state's residents.

K-12 EDUCATORS CAN:

- Engage students in simulations of democratic process and procedures, such as town council meetings or General Assembly sessions.
- Incorporate discussion of local, state, and national current events into the classroom.
- Provide opportunities for meaningful student leadership.
- Implement service-learning that links students' work outside the classroom to what they are learning from their textbooks.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION CAN:

- Promote service-learning that connects students to the communities in which they live.
- Offer leadership development programs that prepare students for leadership at the local, state, and national levels.
- Encourage students to cast informed votes in all elections through candidate forums and "Get Out the Vote" efforts.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS CAN:

- Actively recruit diverse groups of volunteers. Through meaningful opportunities for service, residents realize their ability to make a difference and become more involved in all areas of the democratic society.
- Offer leadership programs such as those often offered by local chambers of commerce and local governments.
- Recruit others than the "usual suspects" for advisory boards and commissions.