

Module 2 – Beyond the Classroom

Outcomes

At the completion of this module you will be able to:

- conceive of your school context as a setting for meaningful student participation
- identify the potential in your school community for the exercise of civics and citizenship education values, skills and knowledge
- create and implement authentic civics and citizenship learning experiences for students using their experiences in the school community
- use students' civics and citizenship knowledge, values, skills and dispositions as a means to inform and strengthen democratic practices in your school community.

Purpose

Students' experiences and participation in the school community can be used to achieve and extend civics and citizenship learning outcomes in the curriculum. The school community and its environment provide authentic and meaningful learning experiences for students, and they effectively reinforce the schools' civics and citizenship curriculum. Students might apply the civics and citizenship values (as outlined in Module 1), knowledge and skills developed in the classroom in the school setting, and they ought also to be encouraged to draw on those experiences in their interactions with the curriculum. Committing the school to a civics and citizenship program has the potential for creating a 'virtuous circle' between the civics' values, knowledge, skills and dispositions acquired in the classroom, and its participatory effect on the students' immediate community, their school.

Aims

The aims of the module are to:


- empower you to consider the school as a setting where students can participate in authentic decision making
- assist you to identify opportunities for effective civics and citizenship learning experiences in your school

- encourage you to consider the civics and citizenship skills that can be fostered in school communities
- inform you through the use of school case studies about the links between the curriculum and students' experiences in the school community
- equip you to implement a civics and citizenship program that includes student participation in the life of their school.

Structure and content

This module identifies the civics and citizenship education outcomes that students are able to achieve through their involvement in their school communities. It contains case studies in which teachers and students have identified issues in the school that could be addressed through student participation and leadership, and underscores the close links between opportunities for student participation and the civics and citizenship curriculum.

The learning model outlined in the introduction will facilitate your engagement with this module by constructing the learning experience for you. At key points, you will be asked to engage with the content of a section by referring to the learning model. Designated sections (*) of the learning model will assist you in constructing your own school program for student civics and citizenship participation beyond the classroom.



Through your engagement with the learning model you will be required to consider the reasons for student participation in their school communities, to work through three case studies in which schools created opportunities for student civic and citizenship participation, to reflect on your school's approach and the opportunities it provides for student participation in decision making, and to develop ways of assessing that participation.

The case studies focus on:

- reducing truant behaviour in disengaged students (a targeted group of students)
- creating student leadership teams (a year level of schooling)
- empowering all students to make decisions and make a difference (whole school).

In your consideration of the three cases studies, you will be asked to reflect on how you would:

- identify opportunities for student participation beyond the classroom
- create effective civics and citizenship programs that provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate and practise civics and citizenship understandings and skills
- ensure that students are active citizens of the school community and have their ideas and opinions routinely sought and respected
- make connections between students' civics and citizenship knowledge, and their experiences in the school community.

Civics and citizenship education focus

This module emphasises civics and citizenship education skills, dispositions and knowledge, specifically:

- recognising and understanding key features of Australian democracy
- developing a critical understanding of the values and principles that underpin Australia's democratic institutions
- identifying the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia's democracy
- developing and exercising the skills of active citizen participation
- applying civics and citizenship knowledge to authentic decision making
- developing an awareness of how values underpin the processes and procedures for participation
- exercising a responsibility for establishing fair processes and procedures for participation and group decision making
- building a capacity for leadership in the decision-making process
- having an awareness of self-held beliefs and values, and how these are informed, challenged and altered by interactions with others.

Reflect

Before proceeding further, reflect on current strengths, areas for development, questions that you may have, and ideas in terms of the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to provide a democratic environment that values and supports student participation in decision-making beyond the classroom.

You may wish to begin a reflective journal or create a 'parking lot', which can be added to as you engage with this and other modules.

Reflective journals are useful learning tools. You can use your journal to record, illustrate or challenge ideas within the Professional Learning Package.

A parking lot is a graphic organiser that can be used to record your strengths, questions, areas for development and ideas.



Democratic participation in school

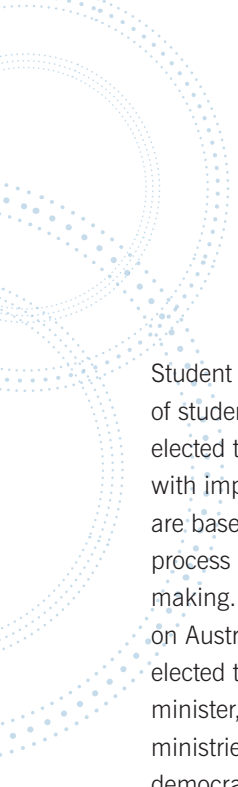
The core values for a democratic society first of all have to be a belief that everyone has the right to participate. We've seen through history, societies where only the rich or the well educated have participated. We believe that everyone should participate.

– John Hirst, Chair, Civics Education Group (2005)

Schools in which students have the opportunity to participate in decision making in an organised, structured way, such as through student representative councils, are reinforcing students' civics and citizenship knowledge, and having a positive effect on their attitudes towards civic participation in the wider community. While students might acquire civics and citizenship knowledge and understandings in the classroom, these understandings are incomplete without an avenue for practice and an opportunity to apply them in authentic situations. Through their participation in the processes and procedures of

whole school decision making, students are applying and demonstrating an understanding of their civics knowledge and are, in the process, acquiring civics and citizenship skills, such as representation, deliberation, negotiation and persuasion, all of which are part and parcel of participatory and leadership capacities in students.

Encouraging democratic participation in the school means charging students with the responsibility of making decisions that affect their learning environment, and encouraging and trusting their perspective and voice in matters to do with the curriculum, school behaviour policies, the values of the school and the school vision. While student representative bodies might become involved in other civics related matters of their choosing, such as community outreach, service learning projects and fundraising, these should not substitute for their core role, that is, the provision of student voices in the management of the learning environment.



Student representative councils typically involve a group of students, often one student from each class, being elected to represent their classmates on matters to do with improving school life. Student representative councils are based on a committee structure and use democratic process to represent the school's student body in decision making. School parliaments, on the other hand, are based on Australia's system of government with students being elected to various parliamentary positions such as prime minister, deputy prime minister and various 'portfolio ministries'. School parliaments aim to mirror Australia's democratic and representative practices. They follow parliamentary procedures, such as moving and debating motions, and voting on their acceptance.

Participating in authentic decision making in schools conveys to students that the concepts and principles that they have learnt in the expressed curriculum are applicable and attainable in their school and in the community. Schools that encourage meaningful participation by students ensure that there is no 'hidden curriculum', that students do not receive the message that participation is an elitist pursuit, something that is not immediately relevant to their lives, or worse, ineffectual.

Roger Holdsworth, Senior Research Associate at the Australian Youth Research Centre, University of Melbourne, raises an important issue for schools to consider regarding student representation on school committees. He notes that, '... even with the best of intentions (these arrangements) can only represent a minority of students within the school. Unfortunately, the way that many schools structure those (representations), is that students who already are relatively advantaged in the school get to play those sorts of decision-making, leadership and participatory roles. It reinforces the inequities within the system.'

In an attempt to address the inequities highlighted by Holdsworth, schools might choose to consider student representative councils as just one of the avenues for participating in school decision making rather than the only avenue. Student representative councils can be complemented by other student initiated groups or committees. Depending on their range of interests, smaller targeted groups of students might be invited to join a 'taskforce' to inquire into and provide recommendations on particular issues or concerns of the school community that directly affect them. A third forum for student participation in school decision making is the establishment of student action teams. Unlike the student representative councils and targeted working groups, student action teams may be set up as an open forum where student inclusion is on the basis of an expression of interest. The student action teams can be set up to identify a school issue that needs to be addressed and is of concern and relevance to the students and then set about taking appropriate action to resolve or minimise the issue. Student action teams may also have a futures-oriented approach where pre-emptive action is taken around student interests such as sustainability or issues such as student wellbeing.

Reflect/Collaborate

Ask yourself, 'Why is student participation in decision making in schools important?' Each time the question 'Why' is answered, ask 'Why' again. Continue to ask 'Why?' until you are satisfied you have arrived at the real reason why student participation in decision making in schools is important. If you are undertaking a collegial professional learning activity, share your reason with your colleagues.

*Reflect/Connect

View your state or territory's curriculum documents related to civics and citizenship education. Use different colours to highlight connections that you can make between the curriculum documents' knowledge, skills and dispositions and democratic participation in schools (that is, decision-making, leadership and participatory roles).

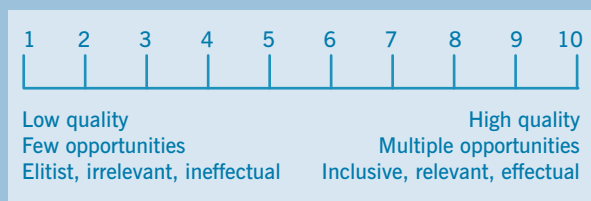
Use a marking system to indicate the knowledge, skills and dispositions that can be practised and applied by some, most and all students; for example, one asterisk for some students, two asterisks for most students and three asterisks for all students.

Apply a different marking system to indicate the frequency with which the knowledge, skills and dispositions can be practised and applied; for example, one tick for rarely, two ticks for sometimes and three ticks for usually.

Reflect

Reflect on the quality and quantity of opportunities for students to meaningfully participate in decision making at your school. Have the 'inequities within the system' been addressed at your school so that all students have opportunities to participate in making decisions regarding school life? Do the opportunities at your school send a clear message to students that participation is inclusive, relevant to their lives and effectual?

On a scale of 1 to 10, record a rating for your school in terms of the provision of student opportunities for decision-making, leadership and participatory roles. You may like to record separate ratings for the opportunities in terms of quality, quantity, inclusiveness, relevance to students' lives and effectiveness or simply an overall combined rating. Provide reasons for the rating or ratings that you have recorded.



Case studies

Educational practices play an important role in preparing students for citizenship. Schools that model democratic values by promoting an open climate ... and invite students to take part in shaping school life are effective in promoting both civic knowledge and engagement.

– Judith Torney-Purta, Chair, International Steering Committee for IEA Civic Education Study (1999)

The following case studies showcase different ways in which schools have developed programs that complement their existing student representative councils by extending opportunities for a greater number of students – or students traditionally overlooked – to participate in school leadership and decision-making roles.

Reflect/Collaborate

As you read the three case studies, record your thoughts about democratic participation in school and highlight any questions that you have. Draw up a four-column PMIQ table. Label the columns 'Pluses', 'Minuses', 'Interesting' and 'Questions'. Record your responses in the table. If you are undertaking a collegial learning activity, consider recording responses for a single case study and then sharing your responses with some colleagues.

Pluses	Minuses	Interesting	Questions

A PMIQ is a graphic organiser that assists the user in recording the Pluses (positive aspects), Minuses (negative aspects), Interesting points (neither positive nor negative) and Questions.

Case study 1

(P–9 school in an inner western suburb of Melbourne, Victoria)

Case study 1 is a P–9 school that has a population of approximately 250 students. The school's philosophy is that every student in every classroom has the opportunity to thrive, learn, achieve and reach their full potential.

The case study is from Roger Holdsworth, *Civic and Citizenship Education: Extended Professional Development Program Stage 2*.

Reducing truant behaviour in disengaged students (targeted group of students)

The school was concerned about the number of students 'skipping classes' and the frequency with which this was happening. Knowing that student attendance was a prerequisite for improved participation and educational outcomes, the student welfare coordinator decided to pilot a project that sought to involve students in an investigation about why students skipped classes, the sorts of activities they did when they were absent from class and what steps could be taken to improve the situation. Rather than approach students who held positions of responsibility within the school, such as representatives from the student council, the student welfare coordinator decided to seek the advice of a group of Year 9 students that had a history of truant behaviour. The students' disengagement was used as a vehicle for engaging them with their school community through their participation in the pilot project.

The students were provided with leadership training. The training equipped them with the knowledge and skills to complete their investigation and report back to the school community, including the principal, staff and school council, with their findings. It was noted by staff and the students themselves that their profile had been raised, in a positive way, within the school and that they now felt a sense of responsibility to be role models and attend classes they had previously missed. The students commented that the trust that had been lost between them and their parents as a result of their truant behaviour had since been restored.

The group of students went on to rewrite the school's welfare and discipline policy which was eventually accepted by the school council. The students were given the opportunity to take on responsibility and were publicly recognised for their contribution. The school reported that the majority of the previously disengaged group of students involved in the pilot project went on to finish their secondary schooling.

Case study 2

(7–10 school in an outer western suburb of Melbourne, Victoria)

Case study 2 is a new secondary school consisting of approximately 80 Year 7 students. The school's vision is to provide students with every opportunity to make the most of what life has to offer, to strive to be their very best and in so doing to be just to themselves and to others.

Creating student leadership teams (a year level of schooling)

In recognition of the fact that traditional ideas about student leadership would need to be redefined, the Year 7 coordinator worked with staff to provide the entire Year 7 student body with opportunities to lead, represent peers and to participate in decision making. The Year 7 students worked with staff to establish the belief that all students could be leaders through their actions in both the classroom and the schoolyard, in their support of their school mates and through their involvement in extracurricular activities

All students in the pioneering Year 7 cohort were involved in one of eight leadership groups. The groups included recycling, publishing, caring for the environment and the student representative council. The purpose of the shared-leadership approach was to teach all students leadership, cooperation and negotiation skills and provide them with opportunities to practise these skills through their active participation.

Class work focused on developing students' understanding of the rights and responsibilities of young citizens. In particular, the class work emphasised the principles and values associated with living in a democracy, in particular a sense of service, freedom, responsibility and leadership. The students were trained in correct meeting procedures including the setting of agendas and the recording of minutes. They were also coached on how to actively listen and have discussions using a 'for' and 'against' approach. The knowledge gained from the classroom was then transferred to the students' understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school community and as community leaders. Leadership group members were equipped with the skills to communicate effectively with their fellow students in order to represent the interests of the entire student body.

The shared approach to student leadership and decision making enhanced the opportunities for students to participate in a wide variety of activities associated with school life. The students were able to explore how they, as young responsible citizens, could actively make the school community a better place through the application of their leadership skills and ensuring that their responsibilities were met.

Case study 3

(R–7 school in a south-western suburb of Adelaide, South Australia)

Case study 3 is an R–7 primary school with approximately 550 students. The school's values are respect, tolerance, responsibility and participation. The school is committed to involving students in the decision-making process and developing students' whole potential.

Empowering all students to make decisions and make a difference (whole school)

The school's scope and sequence chart detailed the units of work to be covered at each level of schooling. The chart included civics and citizenship-based units of work as part of the school's two-year curriculum cycle. Teacher planning based on the scope and sequence centred on the principles that underpin the *Discovering Democracy* units. This ensured that the students developed civic knowledge appropriate to their year level.

An established student representative council operated at the school and consisted of a student from each class being elected to the council. The school organised for staff from the Electoral Education Centre to visit the school and run sessions on the voting process. Students were then given ballot papers and used polling booths that had been donated to the school from past state and federal elections.

Through a process of gentle encouragement over a number of years by the school's librarian, the school made the decision to broaden the active citizenship experiences it was providing so that all students would have opportunities to be involved in decision making as well as opportunities to be actively involved in making a difference to the school community. While the school continued to operate its student representative council, the council was to be just one of the avenues in which students could have a voice.

Student forums, of which the student representative council was now just one, met fortnightly to discuss and implement school and community initiatives. The forums provided students with an opportunity to put classroom-based civic knowledge into practice. The forums were dubbed 'Student Power' by the students as they believed that they had been empowered to make decisions and were making a difference to their school. Unlike the student representative council where students were elected, the Student Power forums involved students submitting an expression of interest to be involved. All students that submitted an expression of interest for joining a forum were provided with a place on its decision-making committee.

The Student Power forums began with students identifying a need or a purpose for their group. The groups were steered and run by the students with a teacher acting as a mentor. Students were exposed to how different organisations were run and why it was necessary to have democratic decision making, voting, consensus and collaboration. The teachers were in-serviced in how to be effective mentors and how to 'take a step back' so that the student forums remained student-centred with regard to decision making and participation.

Examples of the Student Power forums included:

- animal welfare (where student committee members improved the school's natural vegetation and habitats to encourage the numbers and diversity of wildlife and birds at the school)
- friends of the library (where student committee members assisted in the smooth running of the library and the running of activities such as the chess club)
- positive play (where student committee members set up activities in the hall at lunchtime so students who felt 'lost or lonely' had somewhere to play and someone to play with).

Teachers and parents noted that since broadening the opportunities for student participation beyond that of a traditional student representative council that the students were more articulate and confident, had a better understanding about how the school ran and the courage to stand up for the things that they believed in.

Reflect/Collaborate

Use Bloom's revised taxonomy to assist you in interrogating the case studies. If you are undertaking this task as a collegial learning activity, consider dividing up the task by focusing on one of the following and sharing your responses:

- a single case study from the perspective of each of the six levels of thinking
- the perspective of one or two levels of thinking in relation to the three case studies.

Remembering

- What were the purposes, processes and strategies for student participation in decision making?
- What knowledge, skills and dispositions did the students have the opportunity to practise and apply?

Understanding

- How did the school charge its students with the responsibility of making decisions?
- Why might the school have chosen its particular approach to student participation in decision making?

Applying

- How might the students use the participatory knowledge, skills and dispositions in their current lives both inside and outside school?
- How might they use them in their future lives?

Analysing

- What are the similarities and differences between the approaches to student participation in decision making?
- What evidence is there to suggest that there was a high level of student engagement in decision making?

Evaluating

- How could the school have monitored the success of their programs?
- What indicators might the school have looked for to indicate the programs were successful?

Creating

- What steps would you suggest the schools take to create programs that are sustainable in terms of student decision-making?
- What could be done to extend or enhance the students' decision making, leadership and participatory roles?

Bloom's taxonomy was developed by Benjamin Bloom and is based on a six-level classification of cognitive development. Bloom's taxonomy was revised in 1999, by a team headed by Lorin Anderson, with the changing of nouns to verbs and the reversal of creating (formerly synthesis) and evaluating in the continuum.

Reflect

On a scale of 1 to 10, record a rating for each case study in terms of its provision of student opportunities for decision making, leadership and participatory roles. You may like to record separate ratings for the opportunities in terms of quality, quantity, inclusiveness, relevance to students' lives and effectiveness or simply an overall combined rating. Provide reasons for the rating or ratings that you have recorded.



Drawing conclusions

You now have the opportunity to relate your experiences with the three case studies to your school context. The following tasks will assist you in applying what you have learnt from the case studies so that you are better placed to extend or enhance democratic participation at your school. You will make comparisons between your school and the schools presented in the case studies via tasks such as Socratic questioning, creating a flow chart and completing a SWOT analysis.

Reflect/Connect

Use Socratic questioning to explore student participation in decision making in greater depth. Make comparisons between your school and the schools presented in the case studies of good civics and citizenship practice.

Questions that clarify student participation

- What are the most important issues related to student participation in decision making at your school? Were these evident in the case studies?
- How does student participation in decision making relate to student engagement and wellbeing?

Questions that define assumptions about student participation

- What assumptions might teachers in the case studies have made about their school contexts when developing programs that promote student participation in decision making?
- What assumptions can you make about your school context?

Questions that explore the implications of student participation

- How might the teachers in the case studies have responded if a colleague said that the curriculum was already crowded enough without trying to add student participation programs?
- How would you respond if a similar situation arises at your school?

Questions that consider perspectives about student participation

- From which perspective might the schools in the case studies have approached student decision making?
- From which perspective does your school approach student participation in decision making?

Questions that probe positive consequences of student participation

- How might the opportunities for decision making, leadership and participation have positively impacted on the students in the case studies?
- How could similar opportunities positively impact on your students?

Questions that question bigger issues of student participation

- What bigger issues does student involvement in matters such as curriculum, school behaviour policies, the values of the school and the school vision raise for teachers and their schools?
- How can these issues be addressed?

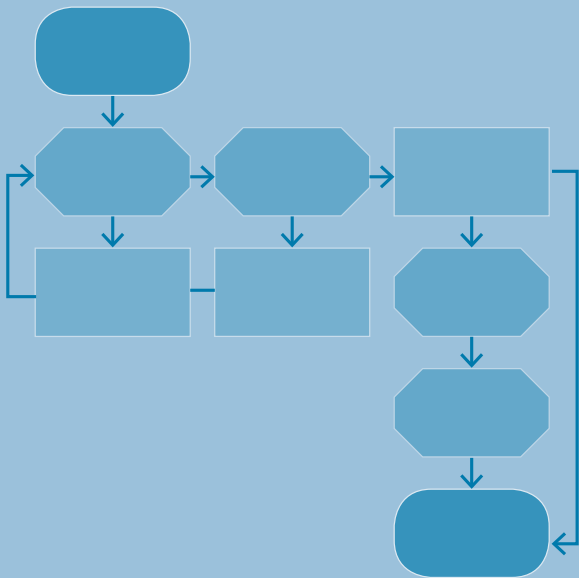
The taxonomy of Socratic questions is non-linear and does not follow a pattern although the categories of questions build on one another.

Reflect

The schools in the three case studies made a number of decisions and undertook a series of actions, steps and tasks to successfully implement their programs. Make a list of the decisions, actions, steps and tasks implied or explicitly stated in each case study. Use this information to create three flow charts. If you are undertaking this task as a collegial learning activity, consider dividing the task up between your colleagues. What do the three flow charts have in common? How are they different?

You might like to complete this task using a visual thinking and learning tool such as Inspiration or SmartDraw. (See 'Resources' on page 41 for details.)

Use the flow chart approach to assist you in planning and implementing programs that promote democratic participation at your school.



A flow chart details the process or stages of a project or program. Typically a flow chart begins and ends with rounded rectangles to indicate the start and end points, has parallelograms to indicate decisions and actions, rectangles to indicate tasks and processing steps and arrows to flow or sequence events.

Reflect/Connect

Use a SWOT analysis to identify the civics and citizenship Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for creating democratic participation at your school. What strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats does your school share with those in the case studies?

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

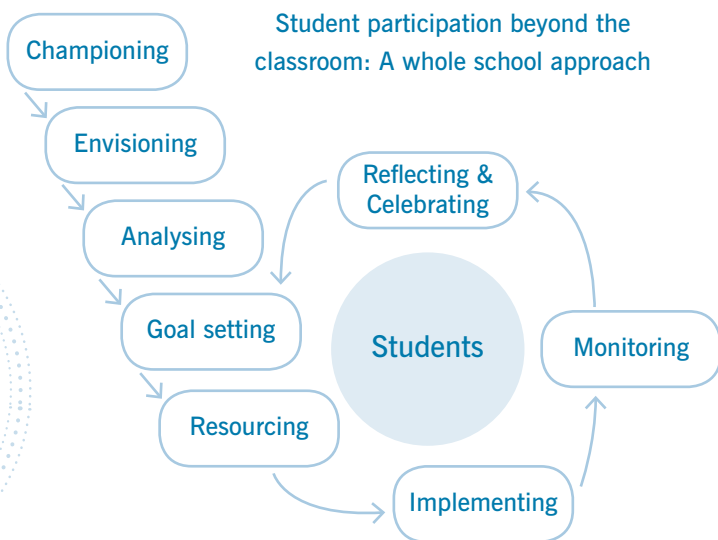
A SWOT analysis identifies:

- internal factors (strengths, weaknesses)
- external factors (opportunities, threats)
- positives (strengths, opportunities)
- negatives (weaknesses, threats).

A model for implementation

A whole school approach to planning and implementing programs that provide avenues for students to practise and apply civics and citizenship knowledge and understandings requires careful consideration. It will involve co-opting colleagues, having a clear idea about the kind of program you want to create, an analysis of the opportunities available and the challenges to be faced. It will also involve establishing clear and attainable goals, setting timelines, identifying the human, physical and financial resources required to realise the school's programs and breaking the program up (if required) into smaller, achievable projects. It will also include monitoring changes in students' attitudes and behaviours, the effect the program has on the school and the progress of the actual program itself and finding appropriate ways to acknowledge and celebrate successes. The setting of new goals will also require consideration as part of the cyclical nature of the whole school approach. Most importantly, schools need to consider how they will actively engage students at each stage of the process.

The following model supports schools to establish and maintain a culture of democratic participation.



Students

The students are at the centre of the whole school approach for student participation beyond the classroom.

What are their needs? What are their interests? How could you find out? What are the school and community contexts in which students learn and live? How will the students actively participate at each stage of the process of the whole school approach?

Championing

In some schools it only takes one or two people to get the ball rolling in terms of a whole school approach for creating a democratic school environment. If you are undertaking this professional development module it is likely that you are one of your schools' champions of civics and citizenship.

Are there any like-minded colleagues or students who believe that all students have the right to participate to help you champion the cause? What level of support can the school's leadership team provide?

Envisioning

Working with others to establish a clear, shared vision of whole school student participation is an important and necessary step in understanding the purpose for such an initiative.

What does a democratic school look like, sound like and feel like? Why is it important that all students are provided with opportunities to participate? What is the vision? How will this approach meet their needs and cater for their interests? How will the vision be communicated to students, parents and colleagues? When will it be communicated?

Analysing

Spend some time analysing the school's current situation and other programs at your school that have achieved desirable results so as to increase the likelihood of achieving success with your initiative.

What is the current level of student participation? Is there a need for change? What are the benefits and costs of changing? What are the benefits and costs

of remaining with the status quo? What successful school programs can you learn from? Why were they successful? What were the programs' initial barriers and obstacles? How were they overcome?

Goal setting

Establishing goals will help you to set a path and to plot a plan of action. It also will enable you to determine the level of success that you, your colleagues and students have achieved.

Start with the context of the school. Ensure that the goals for whole school student participation are realistic. Over what time frame do you aim to achieve your goal – several terms, several years? What are the short-, medium- and long-term goals?

Resourcing

Resources can make or break a program – some are freely available and plentiful while others may be costly and scarce. Resources and funding can be sourced from within the school and wider community, through grants and partnerships with organisations. Making connections and collaborating with other schools in your region or cluster may also widen the available pool of resources and social capital.

What programs are operating in neighbouring schools that you can learn from? What online resources are available? How can outside organisations provide support? Is there any professional development on offer? Are there any national, state or local grants or programs for which to apply? Can local organisations provide in-kind support? Are time allowances needed to develop and implement a plan of action? When will the school program be run – in class or out of class time? Does the current school timetable allow for a whole school student participation program? Are physical resources required to support the program? What are they? How will time allowances and physical resources be funded? How will new staff be in-serviced?

Implementing

The implementation of a program requires a systematic approach that is clear and understood by everyone involved. Large programs may need to be broken up into smaller projects and have a staggered implementation so as to make the program achievable.

How can students be supported to make links between the civics and citizenship knowledge and understandings learned in class to enhance democratic participation in school? How can students' experiences with democratic participation in school be used to support classroom-based civics and citizenship knowledge and understandings? What steps are required to put the plan of action into practice? What roles can students play in planning for implementation? How can any of the inequities within the current approach to student participation at the school be overcome? Will the action plan begin by targeting particular students, a particular class or a particular year level? What needs to be done to ensure that the approach is clear and understood?

Monitoring

Monitoring progress allows you to keep a check on how the program is tracking with regard to achieving its goals. It will enable you to intervene and make adjustments as required. In addition to monitoring the program itself, changes in students and the school culture can also be tracked.

What will be monitored? How will progress be monitored? How will you know if the whole school approach has made a difference? What indicators will you look for to indicate the programs were successful? Has there been a change in student attitudes and behaviours? Can students make connections between their participation and their understanding of democratic processes? How will students be involved in the monitoring process?

Reflecting and Celebrating

Creating a successful democratic and participatory student program takes time, commitment and effort. Spend some time reflecting on and celebrating your achievements.

What are the successes? How will you communicate them within and beyond the school community? How will the success be celebrated? What roles will students play in the reflection and celebration of the program? When will the celebrations occur – at key milestones or at the conclusion of a project? How will the momentum be sustained?

Setting new goals

The cyclical nature of the model for student participation beyond the classroom involves the setting of new goals in order to create a sustainable program that enhances school life.

What are the next steps? What still needs to be achieved? What needs to be done to ensure that the program and its projects are ongoing? How can the program be extended? What connections can be made beyond the school?

The following tasks will assist in planning the implementation of a program that supports students' democratic participation in school. You will ascertain the level of support for all students to participate in leadership and decision-making roles, engage in developing a vision for your program and endeavour to learn from other successful programs in order to apply similar strategies and approaches. You will set goals, brainstorm the resources you require, research ways they can be acquired and develop, through a clear set of steps, decisions regarding implementation.

Please note

- Unlike establishing a democratic classroom environment or creating opportunities for students to participate in the wider community, both of which have shorter timelines (days, weeks and months) and more immediate results, a whole school approach to students' democratic participation is a long-term proposition (terms, semesters and years) with results that may need to be viewed as part of long-term trends.
- Tasks associated with Monitoring, Reflecting and Celebrating, and then Goal Setting, as outlined, will be addressed later in Monitoring progress/Measuring success.

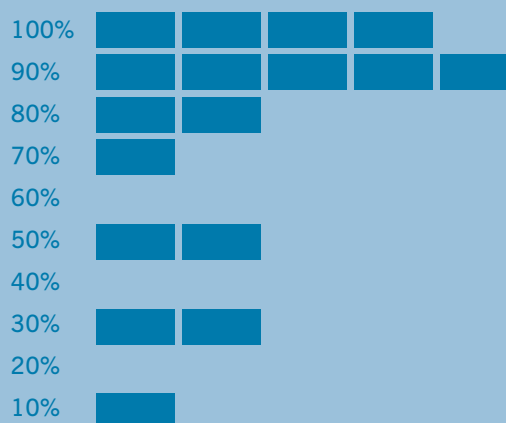
*Collaborate

Students

Survey students to find out what their needs or interests are in terms of student leadership, decision-making and participatory roles. Decide whether you will complete a census (a survey of the entire student population) or a sample (a survey of representative groups of the student population). Conduct the survey, then collate and analyse the results.

Championing

You may already know like-minded people who would be interested in creating opportunities for democratic participation in school; however, there may be others of whom you are unaware. Brainstorm a list of strategies for finding like-minded individuals at your school and gauge their level of commitment; for example, use a consensogram. Ask, 'How committed would you be to a program that created opportunities for all students to participate in leadership and decision-making roles at our school?' Have people record a number on a sticky note in increments of 10% and stick them on a wall or piece of flip chart paper. Encourage people to record their names on the sticky notes so they can be contacted later to form a committee or working party. This task can be completed by both colleagues and students.



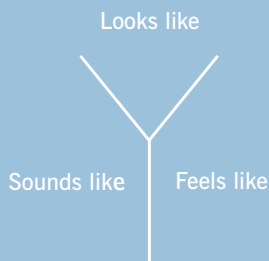
A consensogram is a tool that enables the organiser to gauge the commitment to a proposed project and provides a visual representation of the level of support or opposition.

*Collaborate

Envisioning

Use a Y-chart to assist you in developing a picture of how your school could be in the future in terms of democratic participation. What might democratic participation beyond the classroom look like? What might it sound like?

What might it feel like? Record each response on a separate sticky label. Then categorise the list of responses. Condense the ideas and express them in a simple statement.



A Y-chart is a graphic organiser that assists the user in recording what might be seen, heard and felt.

Analysing

Use a force-field analysis and a case study of one of your school's successful programs to help you identify the factors that may drive, or prevent or slow, the development and implementation of democratic participation in the school. Use the deactivating forces column to record the possible strategies for overcoming or pre-empting the preventing forces. Draw up a three-column table. Record the following headings in your table: Driving forces, Preventing forces and Deactivating forces.

Driving forces	Preventing forces	Deactivating forces

A force-field analysis enables the user to identify forces that can strengthen and support a program, and forces that can weaken or slow a program, and strategies for overcoming or minimising these.

*Collaborate/Construct/Implement

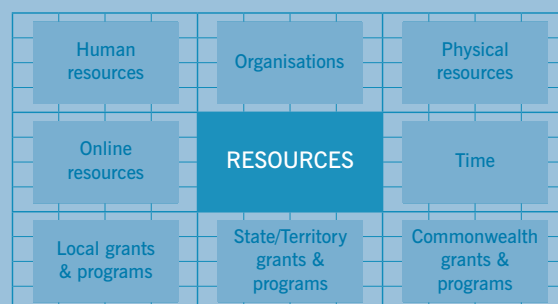
Goal setting

Set SMART goals for democratic participation by students in the school. Remember, you might need to break your program up into smaller, achievable projects. The goals for democratic participation need to be:

- Specific: What do you want to achieve?
- Measurable: What evidence will be collected to support goal attainment?
- Action-oriented: How will you achieve the goal?
- Relevant: Why is the goal important?
- Time-specific: Over what time period will the goal be achieved?

Resourcing

Use a tool such as a lotus diagram to brainstorm a list of possible resources. Draw up a grid as shown and label the categories of resources in the central squares; for example, 'Human resources', 'Organisations', 'Physical resources', 'Online resources', 'Time', 'Local grants and programs', 'State/Territory grants and programs' and 'Commonwealth grants and programs'. Research the contact details of people, programs and organisations, current funding opportunities and places where physical resources can be borrowed or purchased and online resources can be accessed. (See 'Resources' on page 40 for details.) Think of creative solutions for how issues related to time can be overcome and/or financed.

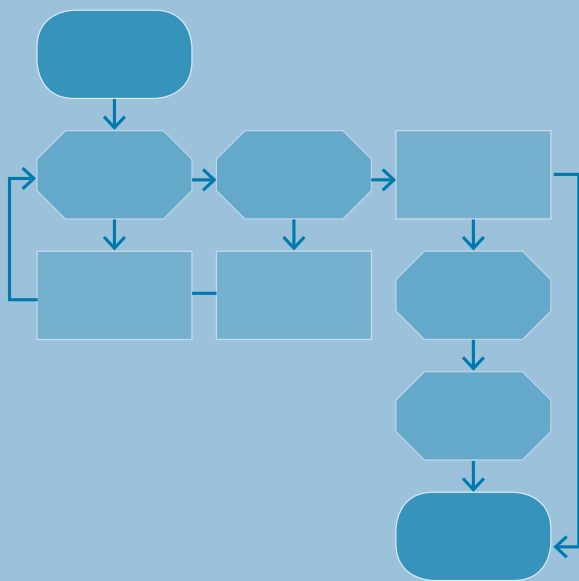


A lotus diagram enables the user to divide broad topics or issues into smaller, easily identifiable components or categories.

*Collaborate/Construct/ Implement

Implementing

Develop a flow chart (or an action plan) to detail the process or stages and the decisions to be made for your school's project or program. Remember to record the person or people responsible for the tasks at each stage, who else will be involved, the resources you will be using and when the tasks are to be completed.



Monitoring progress/ Measuring success

The monitoring of student progress in the area of civics and citizenship education is designed to measure students' civic knowledge and understanding, and the development of skills and dispositions regarding student leadership and participation in school-based decision making. Quantitative and qualitative school data can be used as indicators of an effective civics and citizenship program. Teachers can also monitor their own progress as they support democratic participation at school.

Student knowledge and skills

Curriculum-based approaches to assessing student knowledge and skills about democratic processes and how to participate in decision making include:

- quizzes about the key features of Australian democracy
- projects or assignments about voting, elections and representation
- modelling, role-plays and simulations that demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia's democracy.

Observational and anecdotal school data

School-based data regarding the opportunities for students to participate and their dispositions for participation include:

- the number of students involved in student leadership and participatory roles
- the number and range of student leadership and participatory roles on offer to students
- a willingness to actively participate in student leadership and participatory roles in the classroom and at the school revealed through student interviews.

School measurement data

Although there may be no direct connection between the school's overall quantitative and qualitative data and student leadership and participation programs, schools might see such initiatives as contributing factors or indicators of successful school performance. School measurement data for consideration include:

- school attendance records: an increase in attendance/ decrease in truancy
- student attitudinal surveys: an increase in student connectedness to school and student morale
- student behaviour data: a decrease in the incidence of intimidation and bullying, including cyber-bullying.

Auditing your practice and program

The results of the teacher practice and program audit has the capacity to reveal strengths and areas for development in terms of actively supporting student leadership roles and democratic participation in student decision making. As a result of being involved in the audit, teachers can focus on improving their practice and program.

Reflect

Use the Auditing your practice and program tool (page 39) to monitor your practice and program in terms of providing opportunities for your students to develop the knowledge and skills to lead and dispositions to participate in school-based decision making. Each statement needs to be considered in the light of your classroom context and the age of the students. Those factors influence the degree to which particular statements can be applied and appropriately addressed. Reflect on how you could work on the areas of your practice or program that require attention.

Implement

Monitoring

Review the approaches listed for monitoring progress and measuring success (page 37) and add any additional approaches you know. Decide on which approaches best suit your program and your school context. Identify the points in time when you will employ the approaches for gathering evidence to monitor progress and measure the success of student participation in decision making. Implement the approaches.

*Collaborate/Implement

Reflecting and celebrating

Reflect on what has been achieved and celebrate the successes with students, parents and colleagues. If you are undertaking a collegial learning activity, use a think-pair-share activity to brainstorm a list of ways your successes could be celebrated and promoted in the school and wider community.

A think-pair-share activity enables learners to 'think' first, then to 'pair' with another learner to exchange ideas. The pair then presents to the group, allowing diverse ideas to be collated.

Setting of new goals

After achieving your initial goal, set a new SMART goal. Remember the goal needs to be Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Relevant and Time-focused.

Reflect

After completing the first cycle of the whole school approach for student participation beyond the classroom, reflect on the rating you gave in terms of the opportunities for students to meaningfully participate in decision making at your school at the start of this module.

On a scale of 1 to 10, record a new rating for your school in terms of the provision of student opportunities for decision-making, leadership and participatory roles. You may like to record separate ratings for the opportunities in terms of quality, quantity, inclusiveness, relevance to students' lives and effectiveness or simply an overall combined rating. Provide reasons for the rating or ratings that you have recorded. Is there a difference in the ratings? What do you attribute the new rating or ratings to?



Low quality
Few opportunities
Elitist, irrelevant, ineffectual

High quality
Multiple opportunities
Inclusive, relevant, effectual

Auditing your practice and program

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I make explicit connections between curriculum that illustrates democratic processes and the work students undertake as part of leadership teams and representative councils.				
I identify examples of improvements to school life that are a direct result of student participation and use them as case studies when teaching about civics and citizenship.				
I provide time in class for students to discuss school-based issues and develop ideas for further consideration when representatives convene for leadership and council meetings.				
I create opportunities in my classroom for students to develop a range of leadership styles and skills that can be transferred to their roles as representatives and effective team members.				
I engage my students in a range of decision-making tasks that are increasingly complex and involve competing civics and citizenship values so they are equipped with the skills for making difficult decisions on committees and councils.				
I actively seek the support of colleagues/support colleagues who are extending student leadership and participatory roles at my school.				
I promote the use of community resources to teach students about nominating for election, voting and representation as an authentic and purposeful context for learning about democratic processes.				
I promote student leadership and student participation in decision making as part of the school's vision for developing an active and responsible student body.				
I actively contribute to a school environment that promotes the enactment of the nine <i>Values for Australian Schooling</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Go • Integrity • Doing Your Best • Respect • Freedom • Responsibility • Care and Compassion • Honesty and Trustworthiness • Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion 				

Resources

The following resources, programs, forums and organisations may be helpful in creating democratic spaces in the school and provide opportunities for active student participation in decision making.

Student leadership programs and forums

- Young Leaders Program
www.youngleadersprogram.com.au
- National Student Leadership Forum www.nsf.org.au
- National Youth Week www.youthweek.com
- Australian Youth Forum www.thesource.gov.au
- The Wellspring: Youth Leadership Opportunities in Australia and at the United Nations (UN)
www.alanwu.org
- National Schools Constitutional Convention
www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au/cce/national_schools_constitutional_convention,8980.html

Student Representative Councils

- Charter for Student Representative Councils (NSW Department of Education)
www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studleadsrc/src/charter/index.php
- Just like us (NSW Department of Education)
www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/schoolsweb/studentsupport/studleadsrc/resourcestaff/just_like_us.pdf
- SRC: A practical guide for student leaders and teachers (NSW Department of Education)
www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/schoolsweb/studentsupport/studleadsrc/resourcestaff/srcguide/srcguide.pdf
- SRC Toolkit (NSW Department of Education)
www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studleadsrc/resourcestaff/toolkitregs/index.php

- Student Leadership Framework for Primary Schools (NSW Department of Education)
www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studleadsrc/studlead/primary/framework.php
- Student Voice. A historical perspective and new directions (Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development)
www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/publ/research/publ/Student_Voice_report.pdf
- Victorian Student Representative Council
www.vicsrc.org.au/news

Australian Electoral Commission

- Democracy Rules: An electoral education resource
www.aec.gov.au/Education/Democracy_Rules
- Democracy rules: Counting your vote (Student animation and interactive)
www.aec.gov.au/Education/Democracy_Rules/interactives/counting_your_vote/index.htm

Discovering Democracy units (online): Who rules?

- Stories of the People and Rulers (Middle Primary)
www1.curriculum.edu.au/ddunits/units/mp1stories-glance.htm
- Should the People Rule? (Lower Secondary)
www1.curriculum.edu.au/ddunits/units/ls1people-glance.htm

The *Discovering Democracy* units were originally distributed as kits to all primary and secondary schools throughout Australia in 1998.

Discovering Democracy Australian Readers

The *Discovering Democracy Australian Readers* explore civics and citizenship concepts using contemporary and historical written and visual texts. The books consist of a range of text types from a variety of cultures and periods. Focus on text types involving the theme: Citizens and Public Life.

- *Australian Readers: Middle Primary Collection*
- *Australian Readers: Upper Primary Collection*
- *Australian Readers: Lower Secondary Collection*
- *Australian Readers: Middle Secondary Collection*

The *Australian Readers* were originally distributed to all primary and secondary schools throughout Australia in 1999. *Australians All! Australian Readers Lower Primary* was distributed in 2001.

The Le@rning Federation

Access to The Le@rning Federation's digital content is through your educational body's licensing agreement with Education Services Australia.

- Take a vote: democracy
(Digital resource identifier: L1032)

British Broadcasting Commission (United Kingdom)

- School Democracy
www.bbc.co.uk/schools/citizenx/local/democracy/animation.shtml
- School Democracy: Teaching and learning materials
www.bbc.co.uk/schools/citizenx/teachers/democracy/lessonplan_index.shtml

Other resources

- Inspiration www.inspiration.com/Inspiration
(Free trial)
- SmartDraw www.smartdraw.com
(Free trial)

