



PACE
Commission to Promote and
Advance Civic Education

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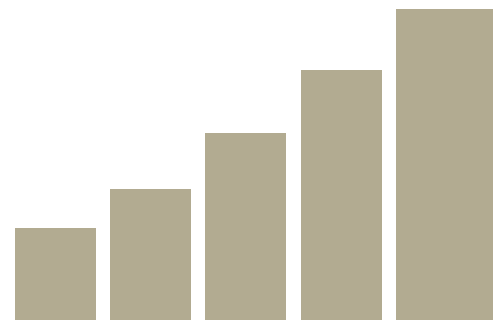
2024-2025 Annual Report





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Summary of the Commission

In January 2021, the Hawai'i Supreme Court adopted Rule 23 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of the State of Hawai'i, creating the Commission to Promote and Advance Civic Education (PACE Commission or Commission).

As set forth in Rule 23, the purpose of the Commission is “to promote and advance civic education for students and citizens throughout Hawai'i.” The Commission is tasked with endeavoring to: provide leadership, oversight, and initiatives to increase civic education in the community and schools; increase knowledge about government; promote informed participation in government and democracy in Hawai'i; provide educational resources for the public about the importance of civic education; maximize the efficient use of available resources by improving collaboration and coordination among entities promoting civic education; encourage attorneys, judges, government officials, and other public and private leaders in Hawai'i to take leadership roles in expanding civic education; reduce barriers to civic education by developing resources to overcome language, cultural, and other obstacles; and increase pro bono contributions by Hawai'i attorneys to civic education.

The Commission's mission statement is “To create, implement, and amplify sustainable programs, resources, and practices that improve place-based, constitutionally informed, and culturally sensitive civic education and engagement in Hawai'i schools and communities.”

In its fourth year, the PACE Commission has continued to work on new civics projects and to expand and support existing programs, seeking to meet the purposes outlined in Rule 23. The Commission has deepened its collaborations with other entities and groups such as the American Judicature Society (AJS), the Department of Education (DOE), the Hawai'i State Bar Association (HSBA), the U. S. District Court for the District of Hawai'i, the Davis Democracy Initiative, the King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center, the Center for Civic Education, and other organizations. Furthermore, a growing number of attorneys, judges, and community members have contributed to the work of the Commission or have reached out to seek ways to partner on civics initiatives. The Commission is proud of its work and its impact on thousands of students and community members over the past three years.

“To create, implement, and amplify sustainable programs, resources, and practices that improve place-based, constitutionally informed, and culturally sensitive civic education and engagement in Hawai'i schools and communities.”



Commissioners

The Commission has fourteen members appointed according to Rule 23 by the following appointing authorities: Chief Justice of the Hawai'i Supreme Court, Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), Superintendent of the DOE, Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawai'i, President of the University of Hawai'i (UH), Dean of the William S. Richardson School of Law, Hawai'i State Bar Association (HSBA), Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), and two members selected by the other appointed members.

Name	Appointing Authority
Hon. Lisa M. Ginoza (Chair)	Chief Justice of the Hawai'i Supreme Court
Rep. Amy A. Perruso (Vice-Chair)	Speaker of the Hawai'i House of Representatives
Matt M. Mattice	Chief Justice of the Hawai'i Supreme Court
David D. Day, Esq.	Governor of the State of Hawai'i
Sen. Dru M. Kanuha	President of the Hawai'i Senate
Ku'uleianuhea Awo-Chun	Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Rosanna Fukuda, MA.Ed.	Superintendent of the Dept. of Education
Hon. Wes Porter	Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawai'i
Debora Halbert, Ph.D.	President of the University of Hawai'i
Troy J. H. Andrade, Ph.D.	Dean, William S. Richardson School of Law
Ruth K. Oh, Esq.	Hawai'i State Bar Association
Deanna S. T. D'Olier, M.Ed.	Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools
Nathan G. Kam	PACE Commission
Colin Moore, Ph.D.	PACE Commission

PACE Committees



In October of 2024, students from various high schools on the Big Island participated in the inaugural Hilo Law & Justice Academy.

The Commission does much of its work through two committees. The Committee on Civic Education in Schools focuses on school-related projects and is co-chaired by Prof. Colin Moore and Rosanna Fukuda. The Civic Engagement Committee works to create and coordinate civics initiatives more broadly to include the community as well as students, and is co-chaired by Prof. Troy Andrade and Steven Uejio. These committees have their own regular meetings, separate from the Commission's meetings.

The Commission would like to express its gratitude to those who consistently participate in our meetings and provide valuable input and service. We would like to recognize Iokepa Command from the Office of Senator Dru Kanuha, Yvonne Yaro from the Office of Representative Amy Perruso, and Alicia Fung, Esq., who prepares the minutes for each Commission meeting. Additionally, we extend our thanks to Nadine Grace for her administrative support to the commission.

At the end of 2024, the Hawai'i State Judiciary established a Program Specialist position to support the work of the PACE Commission. This role is crucial for coordinating and leading PACE Commission projects and activities, including developing and implementing initiatives to enhance civic education and informed participation in government throughout Hawai'i. In February 2025, Keahe Davis was hired to fill this position, bringing a strong background to the role, including his previous work for the Judiciary as the Education Director at the King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center. He holds an M.Ed. in Learning Design and Technology from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Committee Accomplishments



Civic Engagement

The Civic Engagement Committee meets monthly, focusing its efforts on planning and executing various program ideas and creating collaborations with other community stakeholders. This Committee is co-chaired by Troy Andrade and Steven Uejio. Other members include Lynda Arakawa, Keahe Davis, David Day, Linda Lee Farm, Kaliko D. Fernandes, Justice Lisa Ginoza, Donna Kalama, Nathan Kam, Patricia Kickland, Judge Sonja McCullen, Judge Gregory Meyers, Robert Nakatsuji, Ruth Oh, Judge Wes Porter, and Jane Robinson.

This year, the Civic Engagement Committee focused on four initiatives:

Law & Justice Academy

Following the success of the first Maui Nui Law & Justice Academy, the Committee engaged in planning efforts for the October 2024 Academy in Hilo. At the inaugural Hilo Law & Justice Academy, which occurred over the fall break, select students from Hawai'i Island were provided tools to learn about civics and participate in a uniquely tailored mock trial exercise. By the end of the three-day exercise, all student participants argued for their clients in front of real judges from the Third Circuit.

The team consisted of partners from the Third Circuit Court, the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, and the Hawai'i County Bar Association. The Third Circuit judges, particularly Judge Darien Nagata, were extremely generous and supportive of the Academy. Professor Sarah Marusek and Hualani Loo, director of Kipuka Student Services at UH Hilo, provided key support to ensure that students had a robust network of support for college readiness. They also assisted in anchoring the mock trial problem in a cultural grounding. Finally, the Committee acknowledges the significant support of Steven Uejio and Judge Porter in coordinating the Academy curriculum and teaching the primary mock trial sessions.

The committee is actively working on the next Law & Justice Academy to be held on Kaua'i this fall. Donna Kalama, with the Hawai'i Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, is leading this effort, along with a group of others, including Fifth Circuit Judge Gregory Meyers.

Video Contest

The Committee partnered with the American Judicature Society to sponsor a civics-focused category in 'Ōlelo's annual Youth Xchange video contest in early 2025. The idea for a video contest originated with Robert Nakatsuji, who helped guide the final contest to the finish with the selection of winners. Winning entries will be posted on the Commission's website.

Committee Accomplishments

Civic Engagement

PACE Commission Website

In 2023, the Committee assumed responsibility for developing the Commission's website. In conjunction with Nathan Kam and his extraordinary team of web designers and technology experts at FINN Partners/Anthology Marketing Group, the Committee continued to develop the website's content and design to serve as a hub for the Commission's work and outreach to the public. The website launched in 2024 and is being updated by partners at the Judiciary.

Library Partnership

With the leadership of Law Librarian Jenny Silbiger and the collaboration of other committee members like Justice Ginoza and Patricia Kickland, and other organizations like the UH West O'ahu Library, the Committee sponsored a civics forum that featured Judge Gary Chang (ret.), Judge Jeffrey Crabtree (ret.), and former State Senator Maile Shimabukuro. The theme for the discussion was: "Laws Make A Difference (And So Can You!)." The Committee hopes to replicate this model of discussions regarding civics and civic engagement in communities across the state in partnership with libraries.



Students at the Hilo Law & Justice Academy

Committee Accomplishments

Education

The Committee on Education meets monthly to develop resources and engagement opportunities that empower students and educators to understand and actively participate in our civic institutions, and work together to address community challenges. The Committee on Education seeks to do this by (1) evaluating current civic education practices and identifying the needs of educators; (2) fostering opportunities for students to participate in civic activities; and (3) creating professional development programs that enhance educators' abilities to teach civic skills and dispositions.

Hawai'i Schools of Democracy Honorees

The Hawai'i Schools of Democracy (HISOD) program recognizes public schools that demonstrate a strong and sustained commitment to preparing students for college, career, and civic life. Schools receiving this honor have shown excellence in creating learning opportunities and cultivating an organizational culture that centers student identity, agency, and lived experience as foundational elements of civic education.

In 2025, Kalani High School and Kailua High School were honored as official Hawai'i Schools of Democracy. This designation reflects their exceptional dedication to civic education and youth empowerment.

Recognition ceremonies were held on each campus, where Justice Lisa Ginoza delivered keynote remarks. Distinguished guests in attendance included state legislators, Superintendent Keith Hayashi, Deputy Superintendent Heidi Armstrong, Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design Dr. Teri Ushijima, Kalani High School Principal Mitch Otani, Kailua High School Principal Kimberly Anthony-Maeda, and other educational leaders and community members.



Students from Kailua and Kalani celebrate designation as Schools of Democracy.

Teaching Democracy: Insights on Civics Education in Hawai'i's Public Schools

This year, thanks to the hard work of commissioner Colin Moore and the Hawai'i Department of Education, the PACE Commission published its comprehensive survey on civic education in Hawai'i, releasing both the full report and a summary version (see Appendix B and Appendix C).

Commission Meetings

With the exception of June 2024, the Commission met every month between May 2024 and May 2025. The Commission typically meets via Zoom on the third Tuesday of the month. Over the past year, the Commission held meetings on the following dates:

- May 21, 2024
- July 17, 2024
- August 20, 2024
- September 17, 2024
- October 15, 2024
- November 19, 2024
- December 17, 2024
- January 28, 2025
- February 18, 2025
- March 18, 2025
- April 15, 2025
- May 20, 2025

May 21, 2024

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Rosanna Fukuda, Lisa Ginoza, Matt Mattice, Ruth Oh, Amy Perruso, and Wesley Porter, with others also attending. Justice Ginoza called the meeting to order, and the minutes from the April 16, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved. Committee updates were provided, with the Committee on Civic Education in Schools reporting no updates as they awaited results from the Civics Survey, and the Committee on Civic Engagement discussing the Video Contest, the Law & Justice Academy, and the PACE Website. There was also a discussion on collaboration with Kauai and the Annual Report.

July 17, 2024

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference, with several members present. A key focus of this meeting was the contribution of guest speakers Dr. Donna Phillips and Prof. Diana Owen, who offered valuable expertise on civic education. Dr. Phillips, President and CEO of the Center for Civic Education (CCE), provided insights into the CCE's role as a "programmatic civic education organization" that equips teachers, K-12 students, and adult learners with essential resources. CCE's programs include We the People and Project Citizen. Prof. Owen, Director and Principal Investigator of the Civic Education Research Lab (CERL) at Georgetown University, discussed the CERL's work in conducting research on civic education programs and evaluating their effectiveness. The commission also learned about CCE's new pilot program, Project Community, which integrates media literacy into the Project Citizen curriculum. Dr. Phillips and Prof. Owen were in Hawai'i to participate in the pilot week-long summer institute for Project Community. CCE selected the Judiciary History Center to host the pilot program that will be rolled out nationwide next year. Approximately twenty-five (25) teachers from Hawai'i and California were selected to participate in the pilot program.

In addition to the guest speakers' presentations, the meeting included standard proceedings such as the approval of minutes from the previous meeting and committee updates on the Civics Survey and Schools of Democracy. Discussions also encompassed the PACE Annual Report, potential strategies for establishing a position to support the PACE Commission, the PACE Website, and exploration of partnerships with retired judges and public servants.

Commission Meetings

August 20, 2024

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Perry Arrasmith, Lisa Ginoza, Matt Mattice, Ruth Oh, Amy Perruso, and Wes Porter, with others also attending. The meeting included updates from the Committee on Civic Education in Schools, specifically regarding the Civics Survey report and bookmark discussions, and the Committee on Civic Engagement, where a funding request for the Hilo Law & Justice Academy was approved. The PACE Website and ABA Resolution 401 (2022) were discussed.

September 17, 2024

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Anuhea Awo-Chun, Rosanna Fukuda, Lisa Ginoza, Matt Mattice, Colin Moore, and Ruth Oh, with others also attending. The meeting included the introduction of Ku'uleianuhea "Anuhea" Awo-Chun as the OHA PACE Commissioner. Committee updates were provided on the Law and Justice Academy, PACE Website, 'Ōlelo's Youth Exchange Video Contest, Schools of Democracy, and the Civics Survey. The 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence was discussed. There was also a discussion on staff for the PACE Commission.

October 15, 2024

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Kuuleianuhea ("Anuhea") Awo-Chun, Phil Bossert, Rosanna Fukuda, Lisa Ginoza, Matt Mattice, Ruth Oh, and Wesley Porter, with others also attending. The meeting included updates from the Civic Engagement Committee on the Hilo Law and Justice Academy and the PACE Website, and from the Civic Education Committee on Schools of Democracy and the Civics Survey. Other business included discussions on Native Hawaiian law in decision making and advocacy, the America250 Commission, and the AJS/PACE Collaboration.

November 19, 2024

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Anuhea Awo-Chun, Philip Bossert, Lisa Ginoza, Matt Mattice, Colin Moore, Amy Perruso, and Wesley Porter, with David Ball also attending. The meeting included committee updates on the Hilo Law & Justice Academy, PACE Website, partnership with the Library System, Civics Survey, Kids Voting, and the "I Voted" Sticker Design Competition. Other business included discussions on the National Civics Bee and the Judiciary's creation of a staff support position for the PACE Commission. David Ball reported on the Davis Democracy Initiative and Professor Diana Hess's upcoming visit.

December 17, 2024

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Phil Bossert, Lisa Ginoza, Debora Halbert, Colin Moore, Matt Mattice, Amy Perruso, and Wesley Porter, with others also attending. The meeting included committee updates on the Youth Video Contest, partnership with libraries, Law & Justice Academy, and Civics Survey. The AJS/PACE Project and the upcoming legislative session were discussed. Other business included updates on the Program Specialist II position and the Civics Survey by AJS.

Commission Meetings

January 28, 2025

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Anuhea Awo-Chun, Phil Bossert, David Day, Rosanna Fukuda, Lisa Ginoza, Debora Halbert, Nathan Kam, Matt Mattice, Colin Moore, Ruth Oh, and Wesley Porter, with others also attending. The meeting included the welcoming of David Day as the new appointee to the PACE Commission. Committee updates were provided on the Youth Video Contest, partnership with libraries, Kauai Law & Justice Academy, Civics Survey, Hawaii Schools of Democracy ceremonies, and Civic Learning Week. The upcoming legislative session and bills were discussed. Other business included updates on the Program Specialist II position and funding from the United States District Court.

February 18, 2025

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Phil Bossert, Dave Day, Rosanna Fukuda, Lisa Ginoza, Matt Mattice, Colin Moore, Ruth Oh, and Wesley Porter, with others also attending. The meeting included committee updates on the Kauai Law & Justice Academy, partnership with libraries, Civics Survey, Hawaii Schools of Democracy, and America 250. A request from Representative Perruso for funding for Civic Learning Week was discussed. The upcoming legislative session and the Program Specialist II position were also covered. David Ball shared an invitation to public events with Diana Hess, and members generally discussed the effect of recent federal executive orders on civic education.

March 18, 2025

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Phil Bossert, Dave Day, Rosanna Fukuda, Lisa Ginoza, Debora Halbert, Matt Mattice, Colin Moore, Ruth Oh, and Wesley Porter, with others also attending. The meeting included the announcement of Deanna D'Olier as the new Commissioner for HAIS and the welcoming of Keahe Davis as the PACE Program Specialist. Committee updates were provided on the Kauai Law & Justice Academy, partnership with libraries, 'Ōlelo Video Contest, Schools of Democracy, Civics Survey, America 250, and collaborations with AJS on education materials. The Civic Learning Week Floor Presentation and the legislative session were discussed. Other business included funds for a Special Duty Officer for the library partnership event, recognition of FINN Partners/Anthology Marketing Group, PACE joining the CivxNow coalition, and the budget from USDC.

April 15, 2025

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Anuhea Awo-Chun, Philip Bossert, Lisa Ginoza, Matt Mattice, Colin Moore, Amy Perruso, and Wesley Porter, with David Ball also attending. The meeting included committee updates on the Kaua'i Law & Justice Academy, PACE Website, partnership with the Library System, Civics Survey, Kids Voting, and the "I Voted" Sticker Design Competition. Other business included discussions on the National Civics Bee. David Ball reported on the Davis Democracy Initiative and Professor Diana Hess's upcoming visit.

Commission Meetings

May 20, 2025

The meeting was held via Zoom video conference. Members present included Troy Andrade, Ku'uleianuhe Awo-Chun, Deanna D'Olier, Lisa Ginoza, Matt Mattice, Nathan Kam, David Day, and Ruth Oh, with Alicia Fung, David Ball, and Steven Uejio also attending. The meeting included committee updates on the Kaua'i Law & Justice Academy, the continuing partnership with the Library System, and the Youth XChange Video Awards. Other business included discussions on incorporating student voice in the PACE Commission meetings and agreeing to formally join the CivxNow Coalition.



Featured speakers at the inaugural library collaboration from left to right are former State Senator Maile Shimabukuro and retired judges Gary Chang and Jeffrey Crabtree.

2025 Legislative Session



In the 2025 legislative session, the PACE Commission submitted testimony in support of House Bill No. 763 Relating to Civic Education. The Commission appreciates the work of Representative Amy Perruso and other legislators who introduced the bill. The bill was described as follows:

“Establishes the civic education trust fund to support programs benefitting civic education of public school students. Appropriates funds for the expansion of civic education in the public schools and for full-time equivalent permanent civic education resource teacher positions.”

HB763 was heard by the House Committee on Education and the House Committee on Finance, passing with amendments. The bill passed its First Reading in the Senate and was referred to the Senate Committees on Education and Ways and Means.



Honorees at State Capitol with Rep. Amy Perruso and Justice Lisa Ginoza. From left to right – Rep. Amy Perruso, Jessica dos Santos, Janyce Omura, Denise Mazurik, Richard Ornellas, and Justice Lisa Ginoza.

In celebration of National Civic Learning Week, the Hawai'i House of Representatives, in collaboration with the PACE Commission, recognized five exemplary teachers from across Hawai'i for their work in civic education and for inspiring a sense of civic responsibility and community in their students. Those honored were Jessica dos Santos, a social studies teacher at Hawai'i Technology Academy, Denise Mazurik, a Global Scholars Teacher at Waiākea Intermediate School, Janyce Omura, a social studies teacher and alumnus at Maui High School, Richard Ornellas, a social studies teacher at Moloka'i High School and chair of the School Community Council, and Īmaikalani Winchester, a social studies teacher for more than twenty years at Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School.

Collaboration

American Judicature Society

Educational Materials

As set out in its website, the AJS is an independent, non-partisan membership organization working nationally to protect the integrity of the American justice system. Its mission is to secure and promote an independent and qualified judiciary and a fair system of justice.

In 2023, the AJS and PACE Commission started a collaboration to develop and implement a project that will (1) increase public understanding of and confidence in the judiciary in a democratic society, (2) leverage the resources of both AJS and the PACE Commission to achieve greater impact in promoting civic education in Hawai'i, (3) increase civic education resource materials aligned with school standards that are available to educators, and (4) increase outreach regarding civic education to students, educators and citizens in Hawai'i. Under the proposed project, a Curriculum Specialist would provide leadership in the development of new civic educational resource materials that align with DOE school standards. Also, an Outreach Specialist would help to coordinate and support civic education programs and projects initiated and/or facilitated by AJS or the PACE Commission, as well as seek and review educational resource materials previously developed in and out Hawai'i.

The project was proposed by the AJS and PACE Commission for potential funding through the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawai'i Attorney Admission Fund (FUND). A partial approval was given for the project, with the FUND providing \$80,000 to AJS. These funds, in turn, were used by AJS to contract with three Education Specialists representing both public and private schools. These Education Specialists, Sharyl Lynn Fujii, a Windward District Resource Teacher; Cynthia Tong, an eighth-grade social studies teacher at 'Ewa Makai Middle School; and Chloe Thurston, an English teacher at Punahou School, have extensive backgrounds teaching civics-related subjects and creating educational materials for primary and secondary students.

In January 2025, the Education Specialists completed work on several lessons which will be posted to the AJS and PACE Commission websites as free resources for Hawai'i teachers. The PACE Commission thanks AJS Executive Director Sylvia Yuen and Susan Asato for their extensive efforts on this project and their collaboration with PACE.

Video Contest

In the Spring of 2025, AJS and the PACE Commission sponsored a video contest focused on civic action in collaboration with 'Ōlelo TV. The 'Ōlelo Youth XChange Video Competition invites entries from students in grades K-12 enrolled in public, private, and charter schools. Nine schools (three each from elementary, middle, and high school) were selected as finalist in the Champion Civic Action category. The awards were presented at the Youth XChange Awards Show and After Party on May 15, 2025. The video entries will be available for viewing on AJS and PACE Commission websites later this year.

Speakers Bureau

The PACE Commission wishes to recognize the important work of the **Judiciary History Center Speakers Bureau**. A list of schools and groups who requested speakers this past year, as well as the judges who served as speakers, follows:

Schools and Groups		
Center for Tomorrow's Leaders	Kamehameha Schools Kea'au	UH Law & Justice Academy
Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement	Kamehameha School Ulupono Program	UH Richardson School of Law Externs
Haili Christian School	Kaua'i High School	Volcano School of Arts & Sciences
Hanahau'oli School	Kea'au Middle School	Waiākea Elementary School
Hawai'i National Guard: Youth Challenge Academy	Lā'ie Elementary School	Waiākea High School
Hawai'i Academy of Arts & Sciences	Mid Pacific Institute	Wai'anae Elementary School
Hawai'i Baptist Academy Preschool at Gracepoint	Pacific Bridges Company	Waipahu High School
HPU Criminal Justice Club	Pearl City High School	
Jones 'Ohana Home School	UH Community Colleges	

Speakers Bureau



Speakers	
Judge Brian Costa	Justice Sabrina McKenna
Judge Jeffrey Crabtree	Judge Gregory Meyers
Justice Vladimir Devens	Judge Trish Morikawa
Justice Todd Eddins	Judge Darien Ching Nagata
Justice Lisa Ginoza	Judge Henry Nakamoto
Judge Kimberly Guidry	Judge Jeffrey Ng
Judge Thomas Haia	Judge Steven Nichols
Judge Jeffrey Hawk	Judge Alvin Nishimura
Judge Keith Hiraoka	Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald
Judge Shirley Kawamura	Judge Catherine Remigio
Judge Peter Kubota	Judge Fa'auuga To'oto'o
Judge Kanani Laubach	Judge Kristine Yoo
Judge Clarissa Malinao	Judge Bryant Zane
Judge Sonja McCullen	



PACE Funding

The PACE Commission currently has \$16,977.47 in funds which originated from a total of \$30,000 provided by the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawai'i.

Beginning Funds (July 2024)	\$21,217.37
Expenses for Hilo Law & Justice Academy	\$1055.08
Design and Printing of PACE Survey Brochure	\$2303.60
Refreshments for Hawai'i Schools of Democracy Recognition Ceremonies at Kailua and Kalani High Schools	\$361.58
Reimbursements for Honored Teachers to Attend Civic Learning Week Event at the Capitol	\$519.64
Lei for students and their teachers who were finalists in the Champion Civic Action category of the Youth XChange Video Awards.	\$300.26
Funds Remaining as of June 15, 2025	\$16,677.21

Fulfillment of Purposes



Rule 23 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of the State of Hawai'i sets forth six purposes to accomplish the goal of promoting and advancing civic education for students and citizens throughout Hawai'i.

Purpose 1

Provide leadership, oversight, and initiatives to increase civic education in the community and at schools, to increase citizens' knowledge about government, and to promote informed participation in government and democracy in Hawai'i.

The Commission continues to lead on important civics-related projects. The Commission worked with the DOE and private schools to have educators respond to the PACE Commission's civics survey. The completed survey provides important data for focusing efforts and resources to improve civic education in Hawai'i. The Commission also supported and celebrated the DOE Hawai'i Schools of Democracy initiative, which in January 2025 recognized Kailua High and Kalani High as the third and fourth Schools of Democracy in the state.

After the Commission planned and lead the successful Maui Nui Law and Justice Academy in 2022, PACE Commission members planned and executed a Law and Justice Academy in October 2024 in Hilo. The academy was organized with Third Circuit judges, attorneys and other community members. Like Maui, the hope is that the community on Hawai'i Island will take the academy forward in future years, including to the Kona side of the island, and the PACE Commission will be available to assist.

Purpose 2

Provide educational resources for the public about the importance of civic education through collaboration with the media, communication campaigns, statewide conferences, recognition awards for those successfully promoting and advancing civic education in Hawai'i, and by other means.

Through the significant efforts of the Committee on Civic Engagement, Commissioner Nathan Kam, and a team of individuals at FINN Partners/Anthology Marketing Group, the PACE Commission launched its website - www.civicshawaii.org. After several rounds of drafting and reviews, the visually appealing and user-friendly site includes information about the Commission, PACE programs and programs that PACE supports, links to other notable civics-related programs, civics-related events, news, links to informative public and government websites, and resources for students and teachers. This year, the website will add the civic education resource materials created through the AJS/PACE project and civic education videos created for the PACE/AJS/'Ōlelo TV video contest. The Commission has provided consistent support and advocacy for the DOE's School of Democracy initiative, which recognized and celebrated two more high schools in January 2025. Additional high schools are currently being considered for the initiative.

Fulfillment of Purposes



Purpose 3

Maximize the efficient use of available resources by improving collaboration and coordination among various entities seeking to promote and advance civic education in Hawai'i.

The Commission has made long-term connections and is collaborating with multiple groups involved in promoting civics. Several PACE Commissioners participate with CivXNow, a national coalition of civic education groups. The Commission also met this past summer with Donna Phillips, CEO of the Center for Civic Education and Professor Diana Owen, Director of the Civic Education Research Lab at Georgetown University. The Hawaii Girls State and the Civic Education Committee for the Hawaii Chapter of the Federal Bar Association also now have representatives who participate in PACE committee meetings, and continue to explore projects to work on with the Commission, and are accessing resources and contacts that the Commission is able to provide.

Purpose 4

Encourage attorneys, judges, government officials, and other public and private leaders in Hawai'i to take leadership roles in expanding civic education in Hawai'i.

Attorneys, judges, government officials and other community leaders were involved with the Law and Justice Academy in Hilo this year, and many are also involved in the planning of the academy to take place in Lihue later this year. Numerous judges participate in the Judiciary History Center Speaker's Bureau. There are also attorneys involved with the AJS/PACE project, including one who is creating video content aligned with that project and others who reviewed the civics resource materials created by the Education Specialists. The Commission is also now collaborating with the Hawai'i Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. The Commission also continues to encourage the DOE to expand civics in the schools.

Purpose 5

Reduce barriers to civic education by developing resources to overcome language, cultural, and other barriers

The Commission continues to look for ways to reach underserved communities. This was part of the reason the Law and Justice Academy started in Maui County and then moved on to Hilo. The Committee on Civic Engagement is also planning civics projects on Kauai.

With the PACE website now live, we have the opportunity to provide readily available resources for students and educators. This year, those resources will include the civics resource materials developed by the AJS/PACE project. Moreover, the Education Specialists and others that are part of that project were successful in creating materials that are relevant to Hawai'i students and mindful of the important cultural traditions and issues in our state.

Fulfillment of Purposes

Purpose 6

Increase pro bono contributions by Hawai'i attorneys to civic education through such things as recruitment campaigns, increased involvement by the judiciary, and increased recognition for contributors.

Hawai'i attorneys and judges have been active in all facets of the Commission's work. Given ongoing collaborations with AJS, HSBA and the Federal Bar Association, more attorneys will directly support PACE Commission projects in the future. The Commission will continue to explore ways to increase participation.



State Law Librarian Jenny Silbiger (left) moderates a discussion "Laws Make A Difference (And So Can You!)" at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu, that featured State Senator Maile Shimabukuro (ret.), Judge Gary Chang (ret.), and Judge Jeffrey Crabtree (ret.)

Contact Us



(808) 539-4877



info@civicshawaii.org



www.civicshawaii.org



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Promoting the Advancement of Civic Education

IN HAWAII'S COMMUNITIES



About Us

The purpose of the PACE Commission is "to promote and advance civic education for students and citizens throughout Hawai'i," as stated in Rule 23 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of the State of Hawai'i, adopted by the Court on January 7, 2021.

[OUR VISION](#)

Homepage of www.civicshawaii.org



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Rule 23 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Hawai'i

Rule 23. Commission to Promote and Advance Civic Education

(a) Creation. There shall be a commission to be known as the Commission to Promote and Advance Civic Education ("PACE Commission").

(b) Purpose. The purpose of the PACE Commission shall be to promote and advance civic education for students and citizens throughout Hawai'i. The PACE Commission shall, along with such other actions it deems appropriate, endeavor to:

(1) Provide leadership, oversight, and initiatives to increase civic education in the community and at schools, to increase citizens' knowledge about government, and to promote informed participation in government and democracy in Hawai'i.

(2) Provide educational resources for the public about the importance of civic education through collaboration with the media, communication campaigns, statewide conferences, recognition awards for those successfully promoting and advancing civic education in Hawai'i, and by other means.

(3) Maximize the efficient use of available resources by improving collaboration and coordination among various entities seeking to promote and advance civic education in Hawai'i.

(4) Encourage attorneys, judges, government officials, and other public and private leaders in Hawai'i to take leadership roles in expanding civic education in Hawai'i.

(5) Reduce barriers to civic education by developing resources to overcome language, cultural, and other barriers.

(6) Increase pro bono contributions by Hawai'i attorneys to civic education through such things as recruitment campaigns, increased involvement by the judiciary, and increased recognition for contributors.

(c) Membership.

(1) NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND TERMS OF OFFICE. The PACE Commission shall consist of no more than 14 members. Each member may serve 1 or more, but no more than 3 consecutive, 3-year terms, except that a member may continue to serve following the end of the member's last term, until the member's successor is duly appointed. The appointing authority (except with respect to PACE Commission members appointed under provision (c)(2)(xii) of this Rule), may, in its sole discretion, appoint a successor to a member, during the term of such member, with the new appointment to take effect 30 days after the appointing authority has provided notice in writing to the PACE Commission of such appointment.

(2) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS. Members of the PACE Commission shall be appointed as follows:

(i) The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall be entitled to appoint 2 members to the PACE Commission, including a current or retired judge and a representative of the King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center.

(ii) The Governor of Hawai'i shall be entitled to appoint 1 member from the Executive branch.

(iii) The President of the Senate shall be entitled to appoint 1 member from the state Senate.

(iv) The Speaker of the Hawai'i House of Representatives shall be entitled to appoint 1 member from the state House of Representatives.

(v) The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) shall be entitled to appoint 1 member from OHA.

(vi) The Superintendent of the Department of Education shall be entitled to appoint 1 member from the Department of Education.

(vii) The Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Hawai'i shall be entitled to appoint 1 member whom shall be a current or retired U.S. District Judge, Magistrate Judge, Bankruptcy Judge, or Circuit Judge.

(viii) The President of the University of Hawai'i shall be entitled to appoint 1 member who shall be a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i who has a background or expertise in civic education.

(ix) The Dean of the University of Hawai'i William S. Richardson School of Law shall be entitled to appoint 1 member from the faculty or staff at the Law School.

(x) The Hawai'i State Bar Association (HSBA) shall be entitled to appoint 1 member who shall be an HSBA member with a demonstrated interest and familiarity with civic education.

(xi) The Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) shall be entitled to appoint 1 member from HAIS.

(xii) Members of the PACE Commission appointed as set forth above shall have the discretion, by a vote of the majority, to appoint up to 2 additional members to the commission. Any such appointee shall have a background or expertise in communications, public media, broadcasting, journalism, business, education, or non-profit organizations.

(3) **COMMUNITY-WIDE REPRESENTATION.** In making appointments, the appointing authorities shall take into account the effect of their appointments on achieving a PACE Commission composed of members who are residents of different islands in Hawai'i and who reflect the diverse ethnic, ancestral, economic, urban, and rural communities in the Hawaiian Islands.

(4) **VACANCIES.** A vacancy in the office of a member shall occur upon

- (i) the written resignation, death, or permanent incapacity of such member;
- (ii) the determination by the applicable appointing authority that there has been a termination of a position held by such member that was the basis of such member's appointment to the PACE Commission and that the appointing authority wishes to replace such member with a new appointee; or
- (iii) for such other cause as shall be specified in the bylaws, rules, or written procedures of the PACE Commission. Upon the occurrence of a vacancy, the appropriate appointing authority shall appoint a successor member to serve the remainder of the term of the vacating member.

(d) **Officers.** The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall designate from among the members of the PACE Commission a chair and a vice chair. The chair shall serve an initial term of 1 year and thereafter shall be designated at such times as the Chief Justice shall determine. The vice chair shall be designated for a term of 2 years, provided that such term shall expire at any earlier date when the term of the vice chair as a member of the PACE Commission shall expire or be terminated. The PACE Commission shall select such other officers as it deems useful. Terms of all officers shall run on a calendar year basis, except that an officer shall continue in office until the officer's successor is duly designated or selected.

(e) **Bylaws, Rules, and Procedures.** The PACE Commission may adopt bylaws, rules, or operational procedures as it deems necessary.

(f) **Committees and Task Forces.** The PACE Commission may create such committees and task forces, and appoint such committee and task force members, as it deems desirable to facilitate the work of the PACE Commission. The PACE Commission shall designate a chair of the committee or task force. The PACE Commission may appoint to the committee or task force persons who are not members of the PACE Commission. The role of committees and task forces shall be advisory, and they shall make such recommendations to the PACE Commission as the members of such committees and task forces deem appropriate.

(g) **Meetings, Quorum, and Voting.** The PACE Commission shall meet at least quarterly and shall have additional meetings at the call of the chair or at least 5 commission

members. A quorum consisting of not less than one-third of the members of the PACE Commission then in office shall be necessary to transact business and make decisions at a meeting of the PACE Commission. On any votes taken at a meeting of the PACE Commission, the chair shall vote only in the event of a tie.

(h) Staff and Funding Support. While it is anticipated that the Commission will remain an all-volunteer organization with minimal administrative overhead, staff and funding support for the PACE Commission may be provided by a combination of private and public sources of financial and in-kind support.

(i) Recommendations. Any recommendations by the PACE Commission shall be made in the name of the PACE Commission only, and not in the name of the individual members or of the institutions or entities from which the members were drawn.

(j) Reports and Review.

(1) ANNUAL REPORTS. The PACE Commission shall submit to the Supreme Court an annual report describing its activities during the prior 12-month period.

(2) THREE-YEAR REVIEW. Three years after the PACE Commission holds its first meeting, the Supreme Court shall evaluate the progress made by the PACE Commission toward the goal of promoting and advancing civic education for citizens and students throughout Hawai'i.

Haw. R. Sup. Ct. Rule 23 (2021) (West).



PACE

Commission to Promote and
Advance Civic Education

FROM CLASSROOM TO COMMUNITY

Advancing Civics Education in Hawai'i

FEBRUARY 2025

Introduction

Civics education plays a vital role in cultivating informed, engaged citizens, and its effective implementation is essential for a thriving democracy. In Hawai‘i, where unique cultural and historical contexts shape civic life, understanding how civics education is prioritized and supported by our schools and community organizations is vital to ensuring its success and relevance. Recognizing this, the Hawai‘i Supreme Court established the Commission to Promote and Advance Civic Education (PACE) in 2021 to develop robust programs and resources tailored to the diverse needs of Hawai‘i’s population. This report is a critical part of that mission, offering a detailed look at the current state of civics education in the islands.

Purpose and Vision of PACE

The PACE Commission emerged from the Hawai‘i Supreme Court’s long-standing commitment to increasing public understanding of government and encouraging active civic participation. The foundation for this initiative was laid in 2006 when Chief Justice Ronald T.Y. Moon of the Hawai‘i Supreme Court called on Hawai‘i’s legal community to take a more active role in promoting civics education. Later, with the support and encouragement of Chief Justice Mark E. Recktenwald, PACE was established with a vision to foster place-based, constitutionally informed, and culturally sensitive civic engagement in Hawai‘i’s schools and communities.

At its core, PACE believes that civics education is key to preserving democracy and empowering individuals to shape their own futures. The Commission’s philosophy promotes collaboration among educators, policymakers, and community leaders to increase civic engagement and break down barriers to participation. Central to this mission is the idea that civic skills should be developed from an early age and nurtured throughout a student’s academic journey.

Challenges and Opportunities for Civics Education in Hawai‘i

Civics education is often treated as a lower priority than subjects like math and language arts, reinforcing the perception that understanding government and participating in civic life is less important. This diminished focus undermines the development of crucial skills needed to sustain a healthy democracy. While some students are well-equipped to lead and engage, others may feel less confident in their ability to create meaningful change within their communities.

In Hawai‘i, these national challenges are further complicated by the state’s complex history and evolving approaches to civics instruction. In the past,

it was closely tied to “Americanization,” a process that often erased local histories and silenced indigenous voices. This legacy has left many disconnected from their civic identities, creating a pressing need for more inclusive and culturally reflective approaches to civics education today.

At its heart, civics education is about participation and power—the power to speak, to be heard, and to create change. True equity in civics education means ensuring that all students, regardless of background, have the opportunity to learn that their voices can shape their communities. Hawai‘i has a tremendous opportunity to transform civics education by fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility, allowing students to connect with their communities and develop a passion for positive change.

Reimagining Civics Education in Hawai‘i

Excellent civics education in Hawai‘i must begin by cultivating a strong sense of community and shared responsibility. It should help students engage with history, confront injustices, and consider how to build a more just and equitable democracy. Students should be encouraged to ask critical questions, such as: How can we, as a society, make democracy work better for everyone?

Equally important is creating space for informed debate and discussion. Civics education should foster critical thinking, self-reflection, and an understanding of how government functions. By teaching students how to engage in the civic process, from voting to testifying on legislation, we can equip them with the tools to be active participants in shaping society.

Beyond traditional classrooms, civics education should connect students with the broader world. Community-based, multigenerational learning experiences are essential for teaching collaboration and collective problem-solving. Real-world activities that allow students to see the direct impact of their actions can reinforce their role as stewards of both the environment and their society. These transformative experiences can instill a sense of purpose and show students how they can contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Purpose and Focus of the Report

This PACE Commission report offers a comprehensive examination of civics education across Hawai‘i. Its purpose is to provide educators, policymakers, community groups, and other stakeholders with research-based insights into civics education spanning K–12 public and private schools as well as the University of Hawai‘i system.

Section I presents data and analysis from surveys conducted in collaboration with the Hawai‘i State Department of Education (HIDOE) and the Hawai‘i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS). It identifies the challenges and

opportunities within current civics education programs and highlights areas that require resources and collaboration to improve civic engagement.

Section II focuses on civics curricula, extracurricular programs, and available resources in Hawai‘i’s public and private schools, including the University of Hawai‘i system. This section will also evaluate how these programs align with the broader goals of civic engagement. Ultimately, the PACE Commission seeks to create a vibrant, inclusive civics education experience that reflects the cultural richness of Hawai‘i and prepares students to engage meaningfully in democratic life.

By addressing these challenges and opportunities, the PACE report serves as a roadmap for fostering a stronger, more equitable civics education system in Hawai‘i. We hope it inspires collaboration and action that will help to educate informed, engaged citizens who can lead and contribute to the future of Hawai‘i.

Section I: Survey Insights from HIDOE and Independent Schools

To assess the current state of civics education in Hawai‘i, two comprehensive surveys were conducted—one in collaboration with the Hawai‘i State Department of Education (HIDOE) and another with independent schools through the Hawai‘i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) and the Davis Democracy Initiative at Punahou School.

These surveys provide an in-depth look at how civics education is prioritized, implemented, and perceived by educators across the state. Through the voices of teachers and administrators, the surveys reveal common challenges and opportunities within public and private educational systems. From the survey results, it is clear that educators across all institutions recognize the importance of civics. Still, they face significant barriers, such as limited time in the curriculum, a shortage of civics-specific resources, and a lack of professional development opportunities.

This report explores the findings from these surveys and offers a comparative analysis of how public and independent schools in Hawai‘i approach civics education. By addressing the needs identified in these surveys and fostering collaboration between policymakers, educators, nonprofits, and the broader community, Hawai‘i can build a robust civics education framework that reflects its unique values and prepares future generations to engage meaningfully in civic life.

1. Hawai‘i State Department of Education Schools

This survey gathered insights from educators and school leaders regarding the status of civics education in HIDOE schools. It was conducted between October 2023 and April 2024 and was distributed by HIDOE over email to all relevant public school personnel across the state. The survey included specific sets of questions for administrators and teachers that reflected their distinct roles in civics education. The final sample consisted of 168 administrators (mainly school principals, vice-principals, and complex area personnel) and 627 K - 12 public school teachers who reported having responsibility for social studies or civics education.

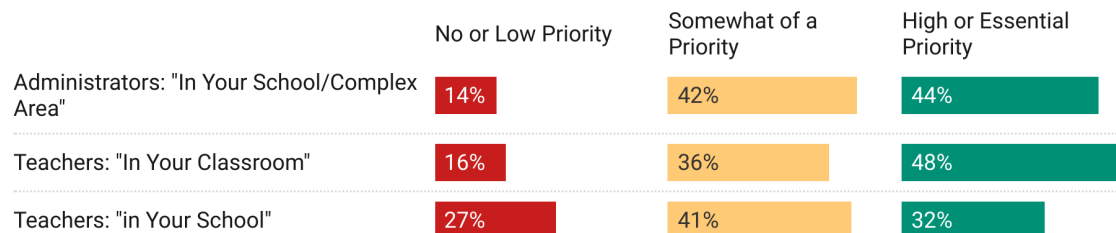
Civics Education: Priority and Satisfaction

Understanding how civics education is prioritized and perceived in Hawai‘i’s public schools is key to improving its effectiveness. The views of teachers and administrators on the importance and quality of civics education differ in understandable but significant ways. This section explores these differences and highlights gaps in prioritization and satisfaction across the state. To compare

the perspectives of teachers and administrators, identical or very similar questions were posed to both groups.

FIGURE 1

Perceived Priority of Civics Education

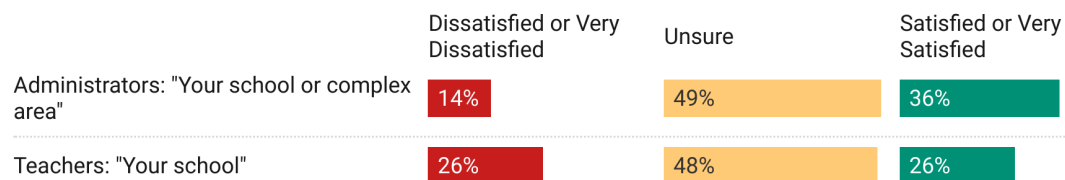


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Figure 1 shows a clear disconnect between teachers and administrators regarding the emphasis placed on civics education. While 48% of teachers feel civics is a high or essential priority in their own classrooms, only 32% believe it receives the same attention school-wide. In contrast, 44% of administrators see civics as a high or essential priority across their schools or complex areas, and only 14% report it as a low priority.

FIGURE 2

Satisfaction with Quality of Civics Teaching and Learning



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As illustrated in Figure 2, teachers and administrators have different perceptions about the quality of civics teaching and learning. Among administrators, 36% report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of civics education, with only 14% expressing dissatisfaction. While 26% of teachers also report satisfaction, there is room for growth as nearly half (48%) remain uncertain about the quality of civics instruction in Hawai'i.

Challenges to Civics Education in HIDOE Schools

Civics education in Hawai'i's public schools faces several significant challenges impacting administrators and teachers. Table 1 highlights different but

overlapping concerns from administrators and teachers. For administrators, the primary challenge is a lack of time in the curriculum, with 59% identifying this as a major obstacle to implementing civics education. An additional 32% of administrators point to the difficulty in discussing controversial topics, and a similar proportion cite limited support for civics education.

TABLE 1

Top Three Answers for Each Group About "Major Challenges" Facing Civics Education

Check all that apply

	Administrators: "What are the major challenges in implementing civics education in your school or complex area?"		Teachers: What are the major challenges you face in teaching civics education in your classroom?"	
1	Lack of time in the curriculum	59%	Too much pressure to teach other content	56%
2	Difficulty addressing controversial topics	32%	Don't have enough/the correct resources	54%
3	Limited support	32%	Students do not have sufficient background knowledge	46%

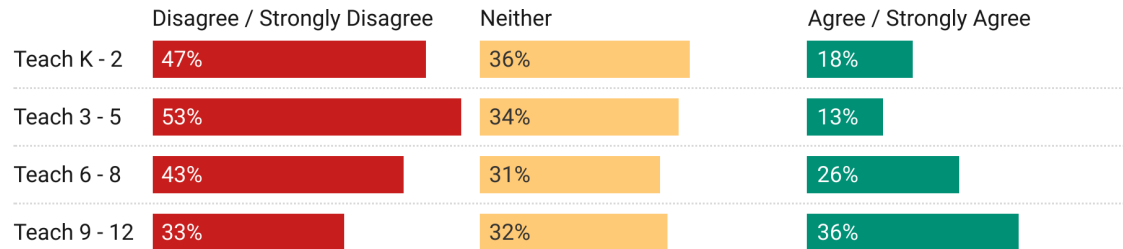
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Teachers, on the other hand, report slightly different challenges in the classroom. According to 56%, the top issue is too much pressure to teach other content, which limits their ability to focus on civics. About half (54%) of surveyed teachers also highlight the lack of sufficient or correct resources, while 46% note that students often lack the background knowledge necessary for understanding civics concepts.

A related survey question asked teachers to what extent they agreed with the statement, "I have access to high-quality, civics-focused curricular materials or resources designed for teaching or learning." The results reveal a concerning trend: 45% of all teachers found the available resources insufficient, which aligns with the broader concerns about the lack of support for civics education across Hawai'i's public schools. When broken down by grade levels, the disparities become even more apparent.

FIGURE 3

"I have access to high-quality civics-focused curricular materials or resources designed for teaching and learning"



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Figure 3 reveals that the greatest opportunity for growth lies in the elementary grades, where 47% of K - 2 teachers and 53% of Grade 3 - 5 teachers expressed a need for more resources. With only 13% of grades 3 - 5 and 18% of K - 2 teachers reporting that they have access to sufficient materials, this gap points to a clear area for investment, especially given the critical role elementary teachers play in building the foundation of civic understanding at an early age.

Middle and high school teachers reported slightly better access to civics-focused resources, with 26% of middle school and 36% of high school teachers feeling they have adequate materials. Nevertheless, many teachers across all grade levels express a need for more resources. By addressing these gaps, Hawai'i's schools can equip teachers to provide more comprehensive and engaging civics instruction at all levels.

Professional Development Needs and Opportunities

In addition to resources, professional development plays a crucial role in supporting teachers. Both administrators and teachers emphasized the need for stronger professional development in civics education, particularly in effective teaching methods.

Table 2 highlights the areas where administrators and teachers believe more training is needed to teach civics effectively. Both groups overwhelmingly agree that the pedagogy of effective civics education—including best practices for engaging student voice—should be the top priority. Three-quarters of surveyed administrators and 71% of teachers identified this as the most essential area for professional development.

TABLE 2

All answers for each group about teacher professional development needs

Check all that apply

		Administrators	Teachers
1	Pedagogy of effective civics education (e.g., best practices, engaging student voice, etc.)	75%	71%
2	Service-learning	56%	49%
3	Taking informed action	51%	48%
4	Media/News literacy	51%	42%
5	Understanding how government works	42%	33%
6	Campaigns and elections	35%	30%
7	Other reply (write-in)	4%	7%

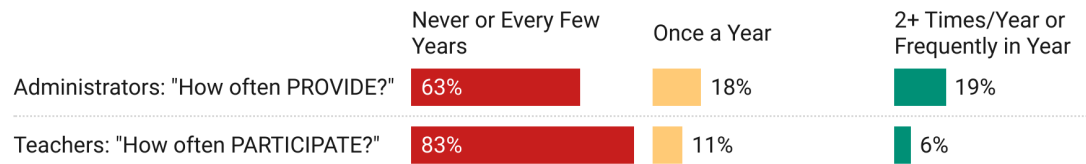
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Other areas of need show some variation between the two groups. Service-learning, a teaching method that integrates community service with classroom instruction, was identified as important by 56% of administrators and 49% of teachers. Similarly, media and news literacy, a crucial skill in today's digital age, was prioritized by 51% of administrators and 42% of teachers.

Lower on the list were more content-specific areas like understanding how government works (42% of administrators and 33% of teachers) and campaigns and elections (35% of administrators and 30% of teachers). While teachers clearly view these topics as important, there is a greater demand for training focused on teaching methods and student engagement. This alignment between administrators and teachers presents an opportunity to develop targeted professional learning programs emphasizing pedagogical techniques and real-world applications, such as service-learning and media literacy, to strengthen civics education across Hawai'i's public schools.

FIGURE 4

Professional Learning Opportunities



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Figure 4 highlights a gap in the frequency of professional learning opportunities. There is a discrepancy between how often administrators provide civics-focused professional development and how often teachers participate. While 37% of administrators report offering such opportunities at least once a year, only 17% of teachers indicate that they participate that often. More critically, most of both groups responded "Never" or "Once every few years," signaling a need for more regular and accessible opportunities.

Civics Education Strategies and Techniques

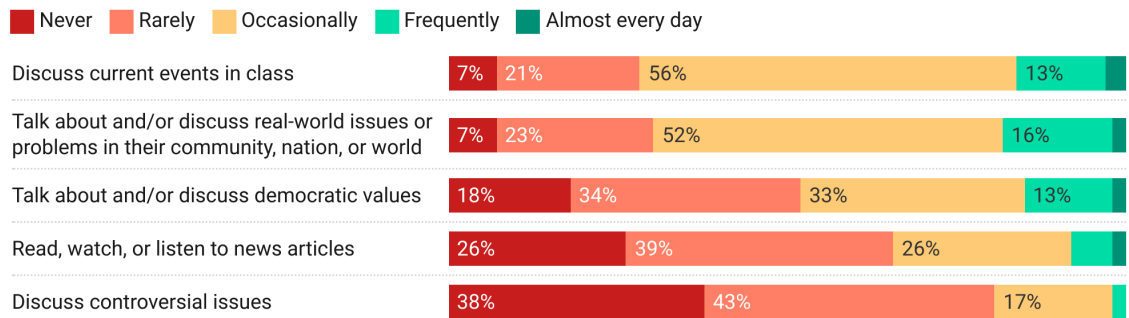
Effective civics education relies on various teaching strategies and techniques that help students engage with civic concepts and develop the skills necessary for active participation in democratic life. This section examines how frequently teachers across different grade levels in Hawai‘i’s public schools use various discussion methods and civic skills activities in their classrooms.

Discussion Methods

Figures 5 - 8 provide a comprehensive view of how civics discussions are incorporated across different grade levels in Hawai‘i’s public schools. These charts reveal patterns in the frequency of key civics discussion methods, from engaging with current events to discussing controversial issues, and highlight how these approaches evolve as students progress through the education system.

FIGURE 5

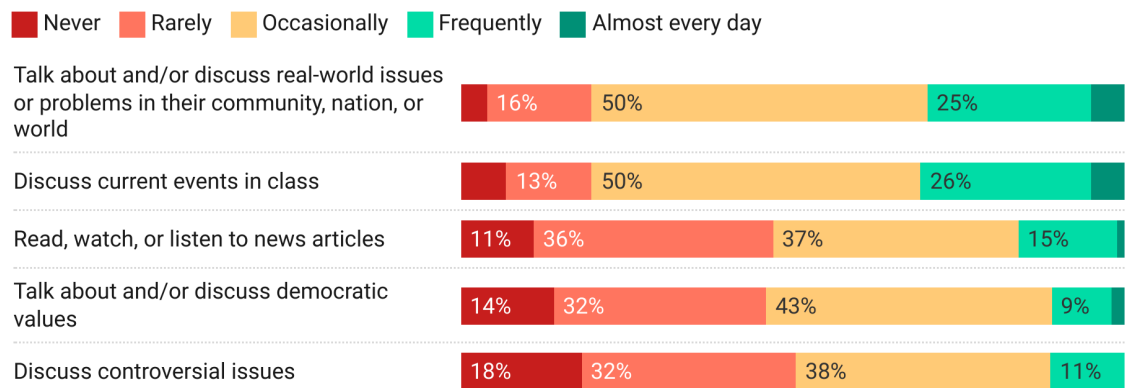
Discussion Methods, Grades K - 2



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FIGURE 6

Discussion Methods, Grades 3 - 5

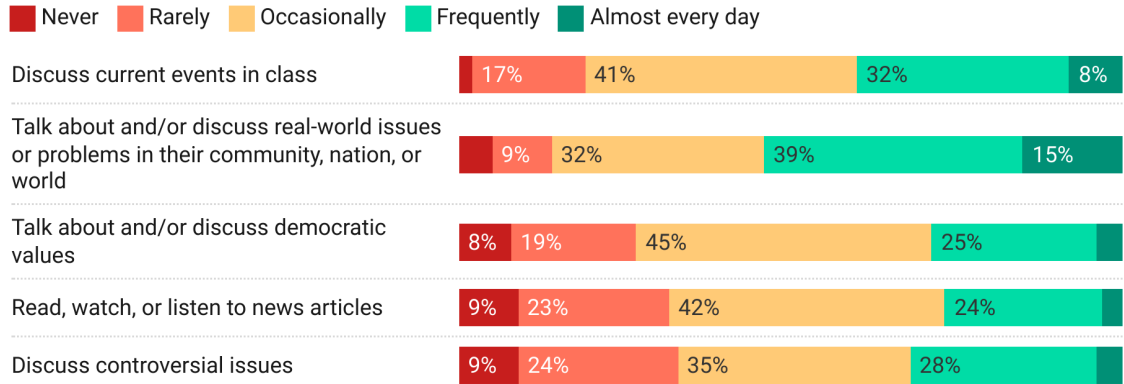


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For grades K - 2 (Figure 5), the most frequently employed methods include discussing current events, where 56% of teachers report using this method occasionally, while 16% do so frequently or daily. Understandably, teachers in these grades are more reluctant to address controversial issues, with 38% never engaging in these topics. As students move into grades 3 - 5 (Figure 6), discussions about real-world issues and current events become slightly more common, with 25% of teachers discussing them frequently and 5% discussing them almost daily. Still, 18% of teachers report that they never discuss controversial topics, and 14% never discuss democratic values, indicating a continued hesitation to engage younger students with more sensitive or complex civic issues.

FIGURE 7

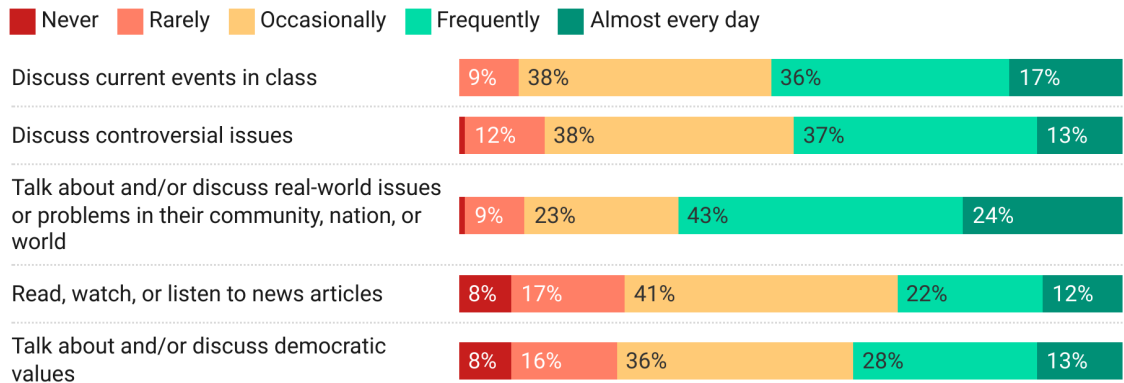
Discussion Methods, Grades 6 - 8



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FIGURE 8

Discussion Methods, Grades 9 - 12



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In grades 6 - 8 (Figure 7), there is a marked increase in the use of discussion methods, reflecting the growing capacity of students to engage with more complex topics. For instance, 40% of teachers discuss current events frequently or daily, 39% engage students with real-world issues at least frequently, and another 15% do so almost daily. There is a noticeable rise in the use of more challenging discussion methods, such as addressing controversial issues, with 32% of teachers addressing these topics frequently or daily. The increased focus on democratic values is also evident, with 28% of teachers discussing them frequently or daily.

By grades 9 - 12, these methods are used even more consistently. More than half (53%) of high school teachers frequently engage students in current events and 67% use real-world issues as a regular discussion topic. Furthermore, 50% of teachers frequently or almost daily discuss controversial issues, which shows a more open approach to addressing sensitive or divisive topics. Democratic values discussions also gain prominence, though 8% of teachers still report never engaging in these discussions. The relatively high use of reading, watching, or listening to news articles—with 34% of teachers incorporating it frequently or daily—further illustrates the emphasis on connecting students to the broader world.

These results show that as students advance through the school system, teachers increasingly incorporate a wider range of discussion methods into civics education. While elementary teachers focus primarily on introducing real-world issues and current events, middle and high school educators engage students more frequently in discussions about controversial issues and democratic values. However, even at the high school level, there is still room to expand the use of discussions around democratic values and controversial topics, which are essential for preparing students to participate meaningfully in civic life.

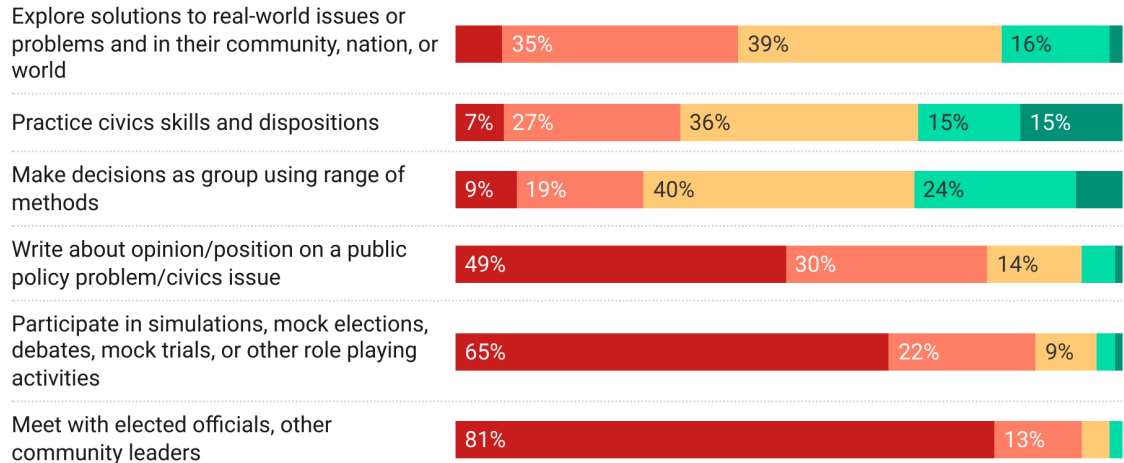
Civics Skills Methods

Figures 9 - 12, which illustrate how civics skills are taught across grade levels, reveal a clear progression in the frequency of various civics activities as students move through the school system. The survey asked teachers how often their students engaged in six different civic skills activities, and the results show that while the use of these methods increases in higher grades, some activities are rarely used, even at the high school level.

FIGURE 9

Civics Skills Methods, Grades K - 2

■ Never ■ Rarely ■ Occasionally ■ Frequently ■ Almost every day

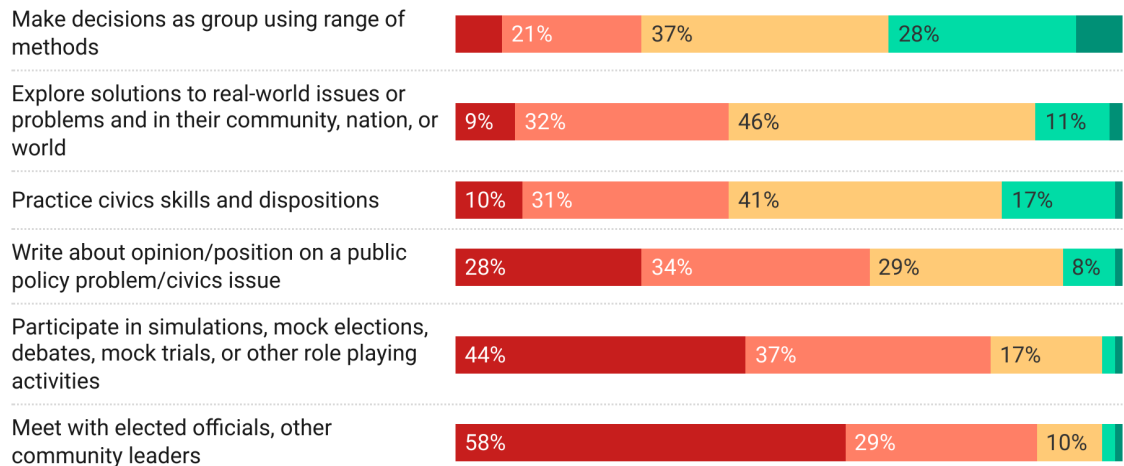


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FIGURE 10

Civics Skills Methods, Grades 3 - 5

■ Never ■ Rarely ■ Occasionally ■ Frequently ■ Almost every day



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As Figure 9 shows, in grades K - 2, the most frequently used methods are making decisions as a group and practicing civics skills and dispositions, with 31% and 30% of teachers, respectively, reporting frequent or almost daily use of these activities. Other methods, such as writing about civic issues and participating in simulations like mock elections, are far less common in these

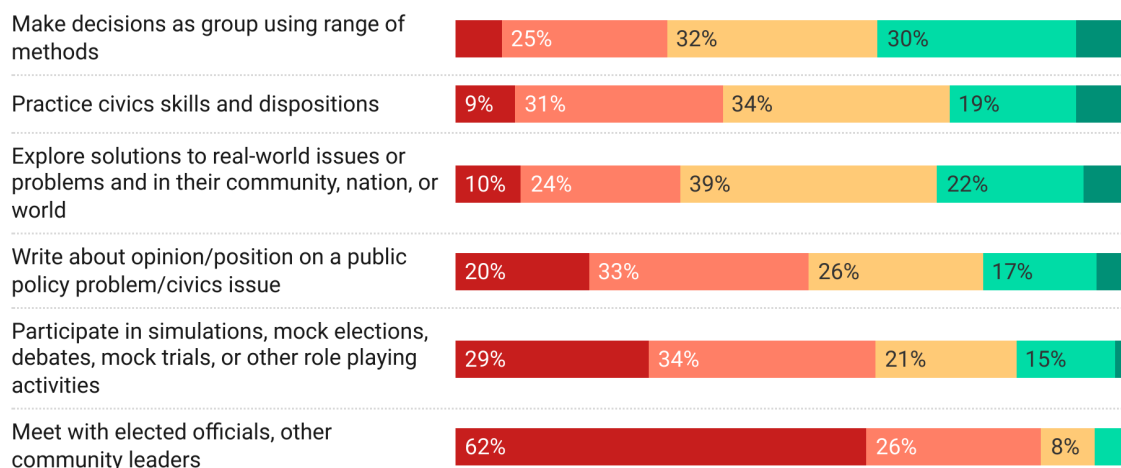
early grades. Particularly striking is the infrequent use of meetings with elected officials or other community leaders, with 81% of teachers saying they never incorporate this activity.

As students move into grades 3 - 5 (Figure 10), there is an increase in the frequency of all civics skills activities. For example, making decisions as a group becomes a more central activity, with 35% of teachers using it frequently or almost every day. However, writing about civic issues and simulations remains less common, with many teachers either rarely or never incorporating these methods. The lack of engagement with elected officials or community leaders continues to be a challenge, with 58% of teachers reporting never using this method.

FIGURE 11

Civics Skills Methods, Grades 6 - 8

Never Rarely Occasionally Frequently Almost every day

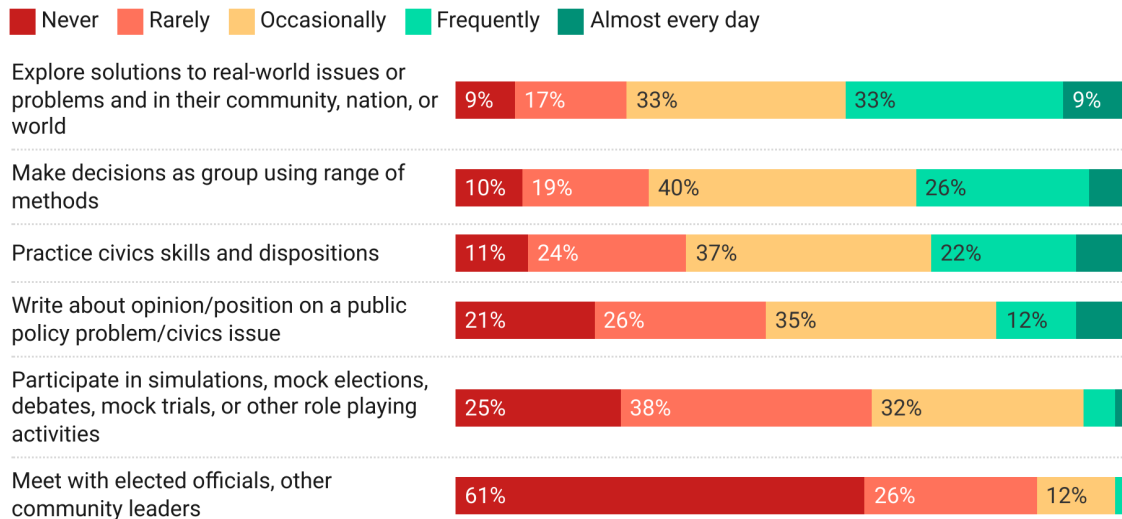


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In grades 6 - 8 (Figure 11), the trends observed in earlier grades continue, with making decisions as a group and exploring real-world issues being the most frequently used methods. By this point, 27% of teachers report that they frequently or almost daily engage students in real-world problem-solving. Methods like writing about public policy issues and participating in simulations also see moderate use. Still, the involvement of community leaders remains low, with 62% of teachers saying they never incorporate this into their teaching.

FIGURE 12

Civics Skills Methods, Grades 9 - 12



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As Figure 12 shows, by grades 9 - 12, students are more frequently engaging in activities like exploring real-world problems, which becomes the most commonly used method, with 42% of teachers reporting frequent or almost daily use. Making decisions as a group and practicing civics skills and dispositions also see significant use. However, even at the high school level, there is still relatively infrequent use of methods like simulations/mock elections and meetings with elected officials, with 61% of teachers reporting they never facilitate such meetings. This suggests that while students engage more deeply with civics as they age, there is still an opportunity to connect them with real-world civic processes and leaders.

Overall, the data show that while teachers increasingly use more complex civics skills methods as students progress through grade levels, there are still gaps in implementing certain key activities, particularly simulations and direct engagement with community leaders, that could further enhance students' civic learning experiences. Addressing these gaps by expanding the use of hands-on civic experiences could further enrich students' civics education and better prepare them for active participation in civic life. The findings suggest additional support and professional development to help teachers incorporate these methods more frequently across all grade levels.

Techniques Teachers Have Found Most Effective

The survey asked teachers to share the strategies and techniques they have found most effective in engaging students in civics education. While the

responses to this open-ended question were not quantified in this report, a preliminary qualitative analysis revealed several key categories of teaching strategies that educators reported as being particularly impactful.

One of the most common approaches teachers cited was relating civics to real-world situations. Educators found that using current events, news articles, and videos helped students connect civics concepts to their own lives and communities. Teachers reported increased student engagement and interest in civics education by making issues relevant and starting discussions or projects with real-world problems.

Another effective method identified was project-based learning, where students engage in solving real-life problems or participate in simulations of civic processes, such as mock trials or debates. Allowing students to choose topics of personal interest and develop projects around those subjects further deepened their involvement and understanding. Class discussions and debates, including techniques like Socratic Seminars and Philosophical Chairs—a structured discussion technique—were also highlighted as important for fostering critical thinking and dialogue on current events and civic issues.

Teachers also emphasized the power of interactive and multimedia approaches. Incorporating digital media, visual aids, and arts integration strategies—such as drama and visual arts—helped make civics concepts more engaging and accessible. Additionally, connecting lessons to students’ personal experiences encouraged them to voice their opinions and reflect on issues that mattered to them. Sharing personal stories and examples was seen as a way to make abstract civic concepts more tangible.

Finally, hands-on activities and simulations were reported as particularly effective in helping students understand civic processes. Teachers described organizing role-plays, mock elections, field trips, and community service projects, providing students with direct, real-world civic experiences. These methods increased student understanding of civics and allowed them to see the practical impact of civic engagement in their communities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This survey reveals a consensus among teachers and administrators on the importance of civics education in preparing students for active participation in our democracy. Yet it also highlights key challenges that impact the effective delivery of this content, including limited classroom time, insufficient resources, and a lack of ongoing professional development. Addressing these barriers is crucial to ensuring that civics instruction fully equips students with the knowledge and skills they need to engage meaningfully in civic life.

One key takeaway from the survey is the opportunity to better align the prioritization of civics education between individual classrooms and school-wide initiatives. While many teachers emphasize civics in their own classrooms, they perceive that it receives less attention at the institutional level.

A second key point is the need for high-quality, civics-focused curricular materials, especially in the early grades when students begin to understand civic life. Providing these resources can empower teachers to deliver engaging and meaningful lessons, helping to build a strong foundation of civic knowledge in students from a young age.

Professional development also stands out as an area for improvement. Both teachers and administrators recognize the need for more civics-specific training. By expanding access to regular professional development opportunities, teachers can stay current with the best practices in civics instruction, including strategies for engaging students with current events and encouraging critical thinking about democratic values.

It is important to remember that teachers are already using effective strategies, such as connecting civics to real-world issues, using project-based learning, and incorporating interactive activities like debates and discussions. Supporting these methods with resources and training will ensure that these successful approaches are consistently implemented across all grade levels.

There are exciting possibilities for strengthening civics education in HIDOE schools. By making targeted investments in resources, expanding professional learning, and ensuring school-wide prioritization, Hawai'i can better prepare students to become informed, engaged citizens who actively contribute to a democratic society.

2. Independent Schools

Hawai'i is home to many independent schools with strong civic engagement programs. To gain insight into how these schools approach civics education, PACE collaborated with the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) and the Davis Democracy Initiative at Punahou School. The survey, conducted between December and April 2024, was distributed by HAIS over email to the heads of independent schools across the state, who then forwarded it to the relevant administrators and teachers at their institutions.

The survey included tailored questions for administrators and teachers, recognizing their distinct roles in civics education. The final sample, though smaller than the respondent pool from HIDOE schools, consisted of 27 administrators and 61 K - 12 independent school teachers. Notably, a significant

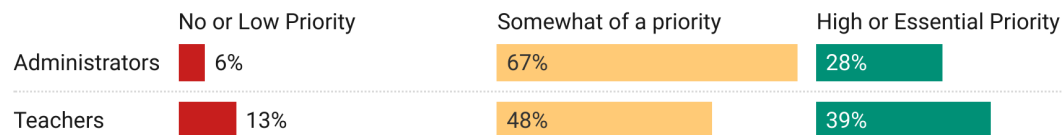
portion of responses came from a single independent school, which may limit the generalizability of these findings.

Priority of Civics Education

This section explores the perceived priority of civics education within independent schools, comparing the views of teachers and administrators. Understanding how both groups prioritize civics is crucial for identifying gaps in focus and developing strategies to elevate the role of civics within these institutions.

FIGURE 1

Perceived Priority of Civics Education



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Figure 1 shows that while only 6% of administrators see civics as a low priority, most (67%) consider it somewhat important, and 28% view it as a high or essential priority. Teachers, however, present a more varied perspective: 13% rate civics as a low priority, 48% see it as somewhat important, and 39% consider it a high or essential priority, notably higher than administrators. This disparity suggests that teachers who work directly with students may place more emphasis on civics, whereas school leadership could see it as less central to overall priorities. This gap offers a valuable opportunity for greater alignment between teaching staff and school leadership to ensure that civics education is given the emphasis it deserves in shaping informed, active citizens.

Challenges to Civics Education in Independent Schools

In this section, we examine the major challenges that administrators and teachers in independent schools face when implementing civics education. Understanding these obstacles is crucial to improving the teaching and integration of civics into the broader educational experience.

TABLE 1

Top Three Answers for Each Group About "Major Challenges" Facing Civics Education

Check all that apply

	Administrators: "What are the challenges in implementing civics education in your school?"		Teachers: "What are the major challenges you face in teaching civics education in your classroom?"	
1	Lack of time in the curriculum	50%	Students lack foundations	44%
2	Lack of training for teachers	44%	Not my major areas of interest/expertise	38%
3	Limited funding	28%	Competing content	33%

Created with Datawrapper

Table 1 highlights the distinct challenges administrators and teachers face in implementing civics education. For administrators, the top concern is lack of time in the curriculum, with 50% identifying it as a primary issue. This is followed by insufficient training for teachers (44%) and limited funding (28%), pointing to structural constraints like tight schedules and limited resources that hinder the effective delivery of civics education.

Teachers, however, face a different set of challenges. The most commonly reported issue is that students lack foundational knowledge (44%), which makes it harder to teach civics effectively. A sizable number (38%) of teachers indicate that civics is not a primary area of interest or expertise, and 33% struggle with competing curriculum demands.

These differing perspectives show that while administrators focus on system-wide issues like time and resources, teachers are more concerned with classroom realities, such as student readiness and content overload. Addressing these challenges will require targeted professional development for teachers and greater institutional support to ensure that civics education is given adequate time and resources in the curriculum.

Professional Development Needs and Opportunities

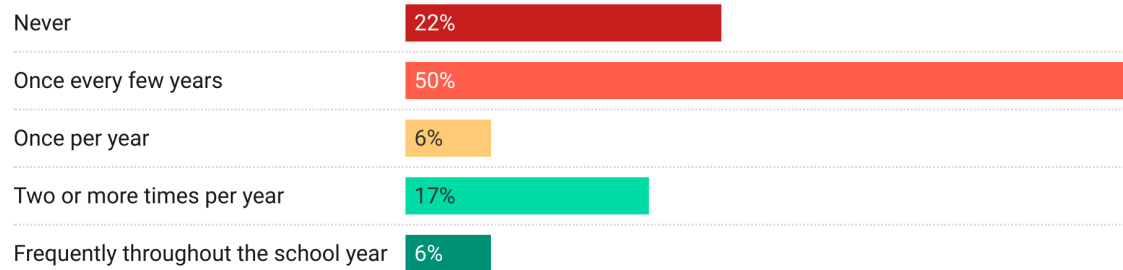
This section addresses the availability and participation in professional learning opportunities focused on civics education within independent schools. Professional development is a key factor in enhancing the effectiveness of civics

instruction, and these charts reveal significant gaps in both the provision of and participation in such opportunities.

FIGURE 2

How often does your school provide professional learning opportunities focused on civic education?

Administrators for independent schools



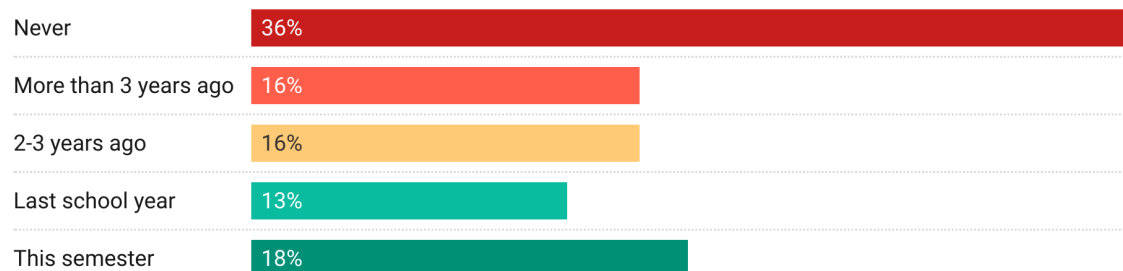
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Figure 2 reveals a sizable gap in professional development opportunities for civics education among independent schools. Half of administrators report that these opportunities are offered only once every few years, with 22% indicating that their schools never provide such training. Only 6% of administrators say civics-related professional learning occurs frequently throughout the school year, while 17% report it happens two or more times per year. This suggests that civics professional development is not a regular focus for teacher training in many schools.

FIGURE 3

When was the last time you participated in professional learning opportunities focused on civic education?

Teachers in independent schools



Created with Datawrapper

Similarly, the data on teacher participation reflects this lack of access. Figure 3 shows that 36% of teachers have never participated in civics-focused training. Only 18% engaged in such training during the current semester, and 13% did so in the previous school year. Notably, 16% reported not having had civics-related training in over three years.

This gap between the availability of professional development and actual teacher participation highlights the need for more consistent and accessible civics training. Increasing the frequency of these opportunities will better equip teachers to deliver effective civics education and ensure a stronger emphasis on civics across the curriculum.

TABLE 2

All answers for each group about teacher professional development needs

Check all that apply

	Administrators	▼ Teachers
1	Making connections between students' interests and beliefs and civic action 67%	59%
2	Pedagogy of effective civic education (e.g., best practices, engaging student voice, etc.) 61%	51%
3	Service learning 33%	43%
4	Media/News literacy 50%	41%
5	Assessments for student understanding of civics education concepts, skills, and dispositions 61%	25%
6	Understanding how government works 39%	21%
7	Campaigns and elections 33%	21%

Created with Datawrapper

Table 2 highlights key areas where teachers in independent schools need more professional development, as both administrators and teachers reported. There

is broad agreement on the importance of connecting civics education to students' interests, beliefs, and civic action, with 67% of administrators and 59% of teachers emphasizing this need. The second priority is improving pedagogy for effective civics instruction. A majority of administrators (61%) and teachers (51%) agree that training on best practices—especially those that engage student voice—is essential.

Nevertheless, there are notable differences in priorities between the two groups. For instance, 61% of administrators see assessments of civics concepts and skills as a key area for development, but only 25% of teachers agree. This suggests a disconnect between the emphasis on evaluation from an administrative standpoint and the day-to-day concerns of teachers. Additionally, 43% of teachers prioritize professional development in service learning, compared to 33% of administrators. This indicates that teachers may place greater value on hands-on, practical approaches to civics, while administrators may focus more on traditional instructional methods and assessments.

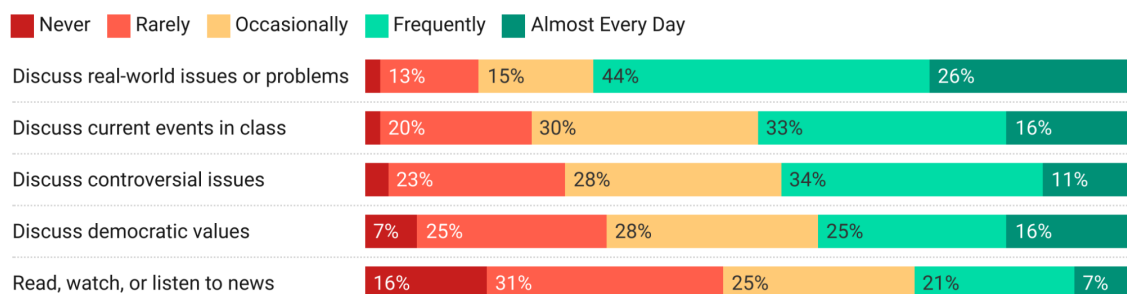
There are also discrepancies in areas such as understanding government functions and electoral processes, where administrators (39% and 33%, respectively) show more interest compared to teachers (21% for both). This may reflect differences in how civics education is conceptualized, with administrators prioritizing formal political processes while teachers focus on more immediate, practical applications in the classroom.

Civics Education Strategies and Techniques

This section reviews the various discussion methods and civics skills techniques used across all grade levels in independent schools, offering insight into the strategies employed to engage students in civics education.

FIGURE 4

Discussion Methods, All Grades



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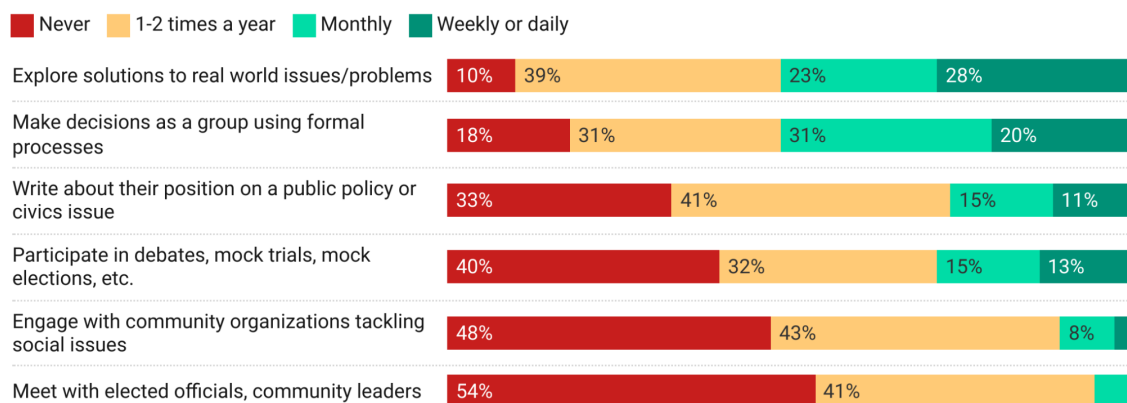
Figure 4 shows that the most common classroom strategy is discussing real-world issues or problems, with 44% of teachers reporting they do so frequently

and 26% doing so almost daily. This real-world focus helps students relate civics to their lives, encouraging engagement. Similarly, discussions of current events are also prevalent, with 33% of teachers incorporating these frequently and 16% doing so daily, reinforcing that staying informed about current events is integral to civics education.

Discussions of controversial issues are less common than one might expect. Only 11% of teachers engage with these topics daily, while 34% do so frequently. Discussions about democratic values are also less common, with only 16% of teachers addressing them daily. The practice of engaging with news in the classroom varies widely. While 28% of teachers do so frequently or daily, 16% never incorporate news and may be missing opportunities to connect civics lessons to real-time events.

FIGURE 5

Civics Skills Methods, All Grades



Created with Datawrapper

Figure 5 looks at the civics skills techniques teachers are using in independent schools. Exploring solutions to real-world problems is common, with 28% of teachers engaging students in these activities weekly or daily. Making decisions as a group using formal processes is another relatively frequent activity, with 20% of teachers using it weekly or daily, which helps students understand governance and collaboration.

However, writing about public policy or civic issues is less frequent: only 11% of teachers include it weekly or daily, and 41% only 1–2 times a year. While debates, mock trials, and elections are effective tools, they are used occasionally, with merely 13% of teachers engaging students in these activities weekly or daily.

The least common activities are engagement with community organizations or meetings with elected officials, with 48% and 54% of teachers, respectively, never including these experiences in their teaching. This suggests that while

valuable, these hands-on civic activities may be difficult to implement due to time or logistical constraints.

The data show that while real-world discussions are frequently incorporated into civics education, there is inconsistency in the use of other strategies, like controversial issue debates, writing exercises, and community engagement. Strengthening these applied civics skills, particularly through writing, debates, and real-world involvement, could greatly enhance students' civic understanding and ability to participate effectively in democratic processes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This survey of independent schools in Hawai'i shows civics education's strengths and challenges. While many teachers emphasize the importance of discussing real-world issues and current events, gaps remain in the prioritization of civics education between teachers and administrators. Teachers tend to see civics as a higher priority than administrators, suggesting a need for better alignment to ensure consistent emphasis across schools. In addition, both groups face distinct challenges, with administrators focused on structural issues like lack of time and funding and teachers concerned with students' preparedness and competing content in the curriculum.

To address these challenges, schools could prioritize regular, accessible professional development in civics education and allocate more time and resources for it in the curriculum. Increasing hands-on civics activities, such as debates, community engagement, and meetings with elected officials, could help deepen students' understanding and foster greater civic participation.

3. Opportunities to Enhance Civics Education in HIDOE and Independent Schools

The surveys conducted across HIDOE and independent schools reveal several shared challenges and distinct opportunities for growth in civics education across Hawai'i. Despite the variations in resources and curriculum flexibility between public and private schools, one of the most frequently identified needs is the increased allocation of time and support for civics education. Both teachers and administrators from public and independent institutions pointed to insufficient time in the school day, limited professional development, and a shortage of civics-focused resources as major barriers. These issues must be addressed to ensure students receive the civic knowledge and skills necessary to engage fully in democratic life.

Prioritizing Civics: Addressing Time Constraints in the Curriculum

One of the most urgent areas for improvement is allocating time for civics education. Teachers from both public and private schools reported that civics often gets pushed aside due to other curricular demands. In many schools where competing subjects like math and reading take precedence civics education often struggles to find its place. Policymakers and educational leaders should work to ensure that civics is given sufficient time within the school day. Schools should be encouraged to prioritize civics alongside other core subjects, recognizing that fostering civic awareness and engagement is as critical as developing academic competencies.

Empowering Educators: Expanding Professional Development Opportunities

Equally important is the need for enhanced professional development opportunities for educators. The survey findings indicate that HIDOE and independent school teachers would benefit from more regular and accessible civics-focused training. Currently, many teachers lack the ongoing support necessary to effectively teach civics, particularly when it comes to engaging students in complex civic discussions or encouraging critical thinking about democratic processes. By investing in professional development that equips teachers with innovative pedagogical strategies and current civics content, educators can be better prepared to foster civic engagement in their classrooms. This training should focus on delivering content and developing interactive teaching methods, such as debates, simulations, and service-learning projects, that bring civics education to life.

Building Better Tools: Developing Civics-Specific Resources

Another critical area of need is targeted resource development, particularly at the elementary level. Both public and independent school teachers reported a shortage of civics-specific materials that are relevant and tailored to Hawai'i's unique cultural and historical context. To address this, educational stakeholders should prioritize high-quality, locally relevant materials. Resources that integrate Native Hawaiian perspectives and focus on Hawai'i's role in national and global issues would enrich civics instruction and help students connect more meaningfully with civic concepts.

Bringing Civics to Life: Promoting Real-World Civic Engagement

A key recommendation is to promote active civic engagement within schools that encourage student voice. While many educators understand the importance of teaching about government and democracy, the surveys revealed that opportunities for students to participate in real-world civic processes are often

limited. Schools should be supported in offering project-based learning experiences that allow students to engage directly with civic activities, such as community service projects, debates, and mock elections. Providing students with opportunities to meet elected officials, visit local government offices, or work with community organizations can help them see the practical applications of their civics lessons.

A Path Forward: Collaborative Efforts for Stronger Civics Education

To address the challenges identified in the surveys, such as insufficient instructional time, limited professional development opportunities, the need for more local resources, and the need for more hands-on learning experiences, Hawai‘i should adopt a comprehensive, collaborative approach to strengthening civics education. No single stakeholder can resolve these issues alone.

Policymakers can play a pivotal role in this process by shaping educational standards and curricula. They must prioritize civics education by ensuring it is given adequate time in the school day, especially in HIDOE schools where civics often competes with other core subjects like mathematics and English Language Arts. Policymakers can also provide the necessary funding to support teacher training programs, resource development, and extracurricular civic engagement initiatives.

Educators themselves must be the key drivers of any change. They are on the front lines, shaping how civics education is delivered in classrooms. Teachers need access to regular, high-quality professional development that equips them with innovative teaching strategies to make civics relevant and engaging for students. Schools should encourage educators to participate in these training opportunities and collaborate with each other to share best practices, discuss challenges, and develop a shared commitment to improving civics instruction.

Nonprofits and community organizations can contribute by providing valuable resources and hands-on learning opportunities. Many civic organizations are already involved in supporting youth engagement in public life through service-learning projects, community outreach programs, and partnerships with schools. Expanding these initiatives can help bridge the gap between theoretical civics education and real-world civic participation. Nonprofits can offer students the chance to meet with local leaders, visit government offices, and engage in community service. These activities provide practical experiences that deepen students’ understanding of democratic processes and responsibilities.

Community partnerships are particularly critical in Hawai‘i, where the cultural context is unique, and the educational system must reflect the state’s diversity. Collaborating with Native Hawaiian organizations and cultural institutions will

help ensure that civics education in Hawai‘i is academically rigorous and locally relevant.

Finally, parents and families are an integral part of this collaborative effort. By encouraging civic participation at home, families can reinforce the importance of civics education. Schools should create opportunities to engage parents in the conversation about civics education and provide them with resources to help continue civic learning outside the classroom.

Addressing the challenges outlined in the surveys requires a broad, inclusive effort from all stakeholders. By increasing instructional time, providing targeted professional development, creating culturally relevant resources, and promoting active civic engagement, Hawai‘i can build a more robust civics education framework that reflects the state’s values and prepares students to be thoughtful, active participants in democracy. By collaborating with policymakers, educators, community organizations, and families, we can create a civics education system that equips students to participate in the democratic process, advocate for their communities, and shape the future of Hawai‘i.

Section II: Current Civics Standards and Instructional Activities

This section examines how civics education is implemented across a range of educational settings in Hawai‘i, including the Hawai‘i Department of Education (HIDOE), independent schools, the University of Hawai‘i (UH) system, and community organizations. Each plays a critical role in shaping students’ civic knowledge, skills, and engagement to prepare them to become active participants in our democracy.

1. Hawai‘i State Department of Education

As one of 43 states that require a civics course, Hawai‘i mandates that students in HIDOE schools take four years of high school social studies, including the semester-long class titled Participation in a Democracy. This requirement is part of a broader effort to ensure that students are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for active participation in civic life.

Since the revision of its social studies standards in 2018, Hawai‘i has embraced a more hands-on and inquiry-based approach to civics education. This shift aligns with the national [College, Career, and Civic Life \(C3\) Framework](#), which promotes critical thinking, real-world application, and active engagement. The updated [Hawai‘i Core Standards in Social Studies](#) (HCSSS) strongly emphasize inquiry-based learning that encourages civic activities.

Hawai‘i’s current civics education is rooted in the belief that a strong democracy depends on the active participation of its citizens. The HCSSS provides a comprehensive framework for teaching civics to guide students from kindergarten through high school. These standards integrate inquiry skills and disciplinary concepts that encourage students to ask critical questions, gather and evaluate evidence, create well-supported arguments, and take informed action.

At the heart of this curriculum is the goal of fostering civic responsibility, democratic values, and an understanding of the rights and duties of citizenship. Teachers are encouraged to connect classroom lessons to real-world applications to help students see how democratic principles are lived out in their communities and society. This focus on practical engagement reflects Hawai‘i’s commitment to producing knowledgeable students and active and informed citizens.

Civics Education Standards by Grade Level

Civics education in Hawai‘i is structured across all grade levels with distinct standards at each stage, ensuring students build progressively deeper understanding and engagement with democratic principles. At the elementary level, students learn about foundational concepts such as the roles of community and government. They also explore civic virtues, with a focus on fairness, respect, and the responsibilities of citizens within their communities. These lessons establish a foundation for understanding the basic structures and functions of governance and the significance of civic values.

As students move into middle school, the curriculum delves further into the principles of U.S. democracy. They are introduced to the Constitution, government structure, and civic participation, and they explore how justice and equity play critical roles in maintaining a healthy democracy. The aim is to strengthen students’ ability to think critically about civic engagement and their role in society.

In high school, civics education culminates with a semester-long civics and government course, which is a requirement for all students in Hawai‘i’s public school system. This course, “[Participation in a Democracy](#),” prepares students for active citizenship by teaching them about civic and political institutions, civil liberties, and civic engagement. Students are guided through the functions of government, the separation of powers, and the role of civil discourse in a democracy. They learn the mechanics of how laws are made and how to engage with elected officials, advocate for causes, and participate in democratic life.

Building on this foundation, HIDOE has recently introduced the [Hawai‘i Schools of Democracy](#) initiative, which recognizes high schools that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to civic engagement and culturally relevant learning experiences. Mililani High School and Maui High School were the first schools to receive this recognition. Subsequently, Kalani High School and Kailua High School have also earned this distinction. These schools have gone above and beyond in shaping the next generation of informed and active citizens by fostering a school culture emphasizing student agency and diverse learning opportunities. The program encourages schools to implement innovative approaches to civics education and supports developing student leadership and civic responsibility.

Opportunities for Growth

To further enhance the curriculum, Hawai‘i’s civics education would benefit from expanding opportunities for experiential learning. While the existing framework emphasizes civic responsibility, expanding hands-on experiences to take part in even more mock elections, internships with local government, or

community service programs could deepen their understanding and involvement. Additional areas for improvement could include creating more robust community-based learning programs. Greater collaborations with civic organizations, government offices, and community groups would offer students immersive experiences in civic participation. Finally, the introduction of assessments that require students to demonstrate their civic knowledge through practical projects could further solidify their understanding of democratic principles and their application in real-world contexts.

By building on its current civics education curriculum and integrating these enhancements, Hawai‘i can ensure its students are not only informed about democratic processes but are also equipped to take on active roles as leaders and engaged citizens within their communities.

2. Independent Schools

Hawai‘i’s independent schools provide a rich and diverse range of civic engagement initiatives, emphasizing experiential learning, leadership, service, and cultural responsibility. These schools integrate civic learning into the broader educational experience and aim to provide students with the tools to become active and informed citizens.

Civic Engagement Through Experiential Learning

One of the core elements of civics education in independent schools is experiential learning, where students engage directly with civic processes. At Punahou School, programs such as the [Davis Democracy Initiative](#) and Kids Voting Hawai‘i allow students to participate in mock elections, debates, and discussions on social and political issues. These activities give students hands-on experience with democratic practices, fostering an understanding of their role as active citizens.

Similarly, Hawai‘i Preparatory Academy (HPA) provides community-based learning projects that link academic concepts to local governance and sustainability efforts. These real-world projects teach students how civic responsibility connects with broader community goals, reinforcing that engagement with government and citizen participation is critical to improving society.

Service Learning and Civic Responsibility

Service learning is another key theme in the civics education frameworks at many independent schools. At ‘Iolani School and Seabury Hall, community service is a critical component of student development. At ‘Iolani, students participate in local and global service projects, tackling social and

environmental issues and helping them understand how civic duty extends beyond the classroom. Similarly, Seabury Hall’s curriculum incorporates service learning as an essential tool for fostering social responsibility, encouraging students to address environmental stewardship and community health issues.

Hawai‘i Baptist Academy (HBA) hosts the Hearts of Service initiative, which involves students in community service projects that range from local environmental efforts to international humanitarian work. Through these activities, HBA helps students develop a sense of civic duty, global citizenship, and leadership qualities.

Cultural Advocacy and Stewardship

Cultural advocacy plays a central role in civic engagement at Kamehameha Schools, where students are encouraged to take on leadership roles in preserving Native Hawaiian rights and promoting environmental stewardship.

Kamehameha’s civic engagement programs are rooted in Native Hawaiian values, particularly the concept of *mālama ‘āina*, or caring for the land. Students learn to view civic responsibility through the lens of environmental and cultural advocacy, contributing to initiatives that protect the land and ensure justice for Native Hawaiian communities.

The school’s commitment to Native Hawaiian rights also includes teaching students about the history of governance and land rights in Hawai‘i. This cultural advocacy model provides students with the skills to be leaders in both civic and cultural spheres, fostering a deeper understanding of their responsibilities to the community and the environment.

Leadership Development and Political Advocacy

Leadership development is a major focus at independent schools like Punahou and Mid-Pacific Institute. [Punahou’s Democracy Fellows Program](#), for instance, will give students opportunities to work alongside public officials, gaining practical experience in leadership and governance. Students at Mid-Pacific are similarly encouraged to participate in leadership councils and organize school-wide initiatives, allowing them to practice civic engagement in real-world contexts.

At Saint Louis School, “servant leadership” is central to the civics education framework. Students are taught that leadership is about service to others and are given opportunities to lead community service initiatives and participate in student government, reinforcing that leadership is a key component of civic responsibility.

The civics education programs at Hawai‘i’s independent schools are designed to foster well-rounded, civically engaged students who are prepared to lead their

communities. By emphasizing a blend of academic knowledge, hands-on experience, and cultural responsibility, Hawai‘i’s independent schools work to ensure that their students are prepared to be thoughtful, engaged citizens who contribute to the betterment of their communities.

3. University of Hawai‘i System

The UH System has made a modest but meaningful commitment to civics education by embedding civic responsibility across its academic programs, policies, and initiatives. Board of Regents Policy 5.213 explicitly links general education to the development of civic-minded students, emphasizing the importance of fostering “lifelong learners, effective workers, and ethical citizens.” This approach demonstrates UH’s commitment to preparing graduates who will actively contribute to their communities and engage with the broader democratic society. The UH System participates in the [College Learning and Democracy Engagement Coalition](#) (CLDE) on behalf of the UH campuses and is committed to continuing the conversation about how to better integrate civic engagement into higher education. Finally, the [UH System strategic plan](#) acknowledges the critical need to foster student success with the explicit goal to “educate more students, empowering them to achieve their goals and contribute to a civil society.”

General Education and Community Engagement

UH Mānoa’s [Office of Civic and Community Engagement](#) and UH Hilo’s [Center for Community Engagement](#) reflects a similar commitment to integrating civic learning across the university’s multiple campuses. The Board of Regents Policy 7.201 also promotes the importance of civic learning through student organizations, stating that these activities are crucial for “empowering students to be responsible leaders in civic duties, community service, or professional matters” and that they help prepare students to “become informed, responsible citizens who engage in, and continue to make contributions for the betterment of humanity and improvement of our communities.”

This commitment aligns with [UH Mānoa’s Institutional Learning Objectives](#) for undergraduates, which include fostering an understanding of civic responsibility, ethical behavior, and stewardship of the natural environment. These objectives emphasize the importance of contributing to the local and global community, promoting equity, and respecting cultural diversity.

A notable strength of UH’s approach is its integration of Hawai‘i’s unique cultural and historical context. The UH System is deeply committed to its role as an indigenous-serving institution, and this commitment is reflected in its

civics education efforts. Through initiatives like the Hawai‘i [Papa O Ke Ao Plan](#), UH focuses on fostering community engagement rooted in Native Hawaiian values and traditions. This place-based approach to civics education enriches students’ understanding of civic learning and encourages them to reflect on their roles within their communities.

Opportunities for Growth

Like many universities nationwide, UH faces challenges in prioritizing civics education, which is often overshadowed by other focus areas such as STEM and workforce preparation. Yet UH has opportunities to integrate civics education more fully across its curriculum. Institutions like Tufts University and Stanford University offer models for advancing civic learning. For instance, Tufts’ [Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life](#) serves as an interdisciplinary hub dedicated to civics education and engagement, showcasing how universities can centralize their efforts around civic responsibility. Similarly, [Stanford’s Haas Center for Public Service](#) provides numerous opportunities for students to engage with civic issues through service learning, internships, and community-based research.

As UH continues to refine its civics education offerings, there is potential for growth. The current general education redesign offers an opportunity to ensure that all students, regardless of their major or campus, have access to meaningful civics education experiences. By continuing to emphasize the importance of civic responsibility, UH can position itself as a leader in producing graduates who are not only career-ready but also prepared to take on the responsibilities of citizenship.

4. Nonprofit and Community-Based Enrichment Programs

Nonprofit and community-based enrichment programs in Hawai‘i provide critical support for civics education, complementing formal education systems and addressing gaps in teaching the principles of democracy, civic responsibility, and leadership. These programs engage students in diverse ways, from leadership development and community service to increasing civic knowledge and empowering young people.

Leadership Development

Many nonprofit programs in Hawai‘i aim to cultivate leadership qualities in young people, preparing them to become active participants in their communities and broader society. These programs often employ experiential learning techniques, such as service projects, simulations of government

processes, and mentorship, to help youth develop practical skills and a sense of civic responsibility.

The [After-School All-Stars](#) program offers students structured after-school activities beyond the classroom. Through various team-based projects and community service initiatives, participants are encouraged to take on leadership roles, which helps them gain confidence in their abilities to effect positive change.

Similarly, the [Scouting America: Aloha Council](#) provides young people with numerous opportunities to develop leadership skills through its merit badge system. Scouts engage in activities that require them to research local governance, meet with elected officials, and participate in community service, blending learning with hands-on civic engagement. The [Girl Scouts of Hawai‘i](#) take a similar approach by offering badges related to democracy, public policy, and community service.

At the YMCA of Honolulu, the focus on leadership development is similarly strong, particularly through the [Youth & Government program](#). This initiative immerses students in a simulated legislative process, allowing them to draft, debate, and pass mock legislation. The program mirrors the workings of the state government, giving students an in-depth understanding of how laws are made while cultivating public speaking, negotiation, and leadership skills.

These leadership-focused programs share the common goal of preparing young people to become active, informed citizens. Their success lies in their ability to connect theoretical knowledge with practical experience, giving participants the confidence and skills necessary to engage in civic life.

Community Engagement

Another core theme that emerges from Hawai‘i's nonprofit sector is the emphasis on community service and engagement. Programs focusing on community involvement teach participants about the importance of civic duty and offer practical ways for them to contribute to their local environments.

The Rotary Club of Honolulu emphasizes the importance of community service, particularly through its youth leadership programs. One such program, the [Rotary Youth Leadership Awards](#), is designed to give high school students the tools they need to become community leaders. Participants engage in service projects that address local needs, such as food insecurity or environmental conservation while developing leadership and organizational skills.

At [KUPU](#), the connection between community service and environmental stewardship is particularly strong. KUPU's programs, such as the [Hawai‘i Youth Conservation Corps](#), engage young people in hands-on projects aimed at preserving Hawai‘i's natural resources. Participants work on conservation

efforts across the islands, learning about environmental science and the civic responsibilities associated with sustainability.

Civic Knowledge

While leadership and community service are critical, another key element of civics education is the direct instruction of civic knowledge: how government works, what rights and responsibilities citizens have, and how individuals can participate in civic processes. Several programs in Hawai'i are dedicated to this kind of educational enrichment, filling gaps often left by formal education systems.

The [King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center](#) (JHC), part of the Hawai'i State Judiciary, offers diverse civics education resources to improve students' grasp of the judicial system and its significance in democracy. These resources encompass lesson plans, interactive activities, and educational videos that focus on essential topics such as the structure of the judiciary, the significance of the rule of law, and notable court cases. Additionally, the Center offers mock trial activities, enabling students to engage in simulated court scenarios while learning about legal processes and decision-making.

As the Hawai'i State Coordinator for civics education initiatives run by the California-based [Center for Civic Education](#) (CCE), a national leader in civic education, JHC provides training, curriculum, and teacher support for CCE's [We the People](#) program, [Project Citizen](#), and [Project Community](#). We the People offers students a detailed understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, Project Citizen encourages students to examine and engage in public policy issues affecting their communities, and Project Community integrates media literacy with hands-on engagement in public policy.

Another notable initiative is the Hawai'i State Judiciary's [Courts in the Community Program](#), an outreach effort that provides high school students with a unique, hands-on experience in understanding how the Hawai'i judicial system operates.

The [Hawai'i State Bar Civic Education Committee](#) also plays an important role in expanding civic knowledge. By offering educational resources and presentations on the legal system, the committee helps students and the broader public understand the role of the judiciary and the importance of the rule of law in maintaining a democratic society. [Get Ready Hawai'i](#), another key player in civics education, focuses on preparing young people to be active, informed citizens. The program encourages critical thinking about governance and civic participation through workshops, webinars, and educational materials.

Youth Engagement

Finally, several programs in Hawai'i focus on empowering youth to take active roles in shaping their futures and advocating for their communities. These programs provide leadership and civic knowledge and give young people the tools to make their voices heard in civic and political arenas.

At the [Hāmākua Youth Center](#), young people are given a platform to engage in civic discussions and participate in community development projects. [Nā Pua No'eau](#), a program at the University of Hawai'i, takes a culturally focused approach to youth empowerment. Targeted at Native Hawaiian students, the program blends traditional cultural knowledge with civic engagement. The [Lili'uokalani Trust](#) offers similar empowerment opportunities for Native Hawaiian youth, focusing on service learning and advocacy. The trust's programs emphasize the importance of civic action in protecting and advancing the interests of Native Hawaiian communities. On Maui, [Maui Hui Mālama](#) provides at-risk youth with mentorship and education designed to empower them to take control of their futures.

Nonprofit and enrichment programs in Hawai'i play a crucial role in supporting and enhancing civics education. Through leadership development, civic knowledge instruction, and youth empowerment, these programs help prepare the next generation of citizens to be active, informed, and responsible participants in their communities and beyond.

As additional resources become available, PACE will maintain an updated list of active programs that support civic engagement and civics education in Hawai'i that may be accessed on the PACE website and directly through the following link: [Civics Education and Engagement Programs](#).

Section III. Building on Success: Hawai‘i’s Approach to Civics Education

Hawai‘i has made meaningful progress in developing a civics education system rooted in its unique cultural and historical context. Nonprofit and school-based programs are also making strides by incorporating service learning, leadership development, and real-world civic engagement opportunities. These successes provide a strong foundation for further growth.

Targeted Professional Development

Despite these strengths, Hawai‘i faces a critical challenge in ensuring equitable access to high-quality civics education, particularly in elementary schools. Teachers have expressed a need for more civics-focused materials, especially in the early grades. Addressing these disparities will be essential to building a comprehensive and inclusive civics continuum that equips all students with the knowledge and skills to participate actively in democracy.

Both teachers and administrators have emphasized the importance of regular, civics-specific professional development. Expanding training on effective teaching strategies such as project-based learning, debates, and service learning would significantly enhance educators' ability to engage students. With ongoing professional development, teachers can stay current with best practices, ensuring that civics education remains relevant and impactful for students at all levels.

Expanding Hands-on Learning Opportunities

While service-learning and leadership programs are already part of many schools and nonprofits, there is a clear opportunity to expand experiential learning. Programs like mock elections, simulations, and meetings with elected officials provide valuable opportunities for growth through direct engagement with democratic processes. By increasing access to these hands-on experiences, students will gain a deeper, more practical understanding of civic participation, preparing them to engage fully in their communities and government.

Building Bridges: Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships

Collaboration between HIDOE, independent schools, and nonprofit organizations is critical to creating more opportunities for civic engagement. Strengthened partnerships will allow schools to expand service-learning, environmental stewardship, and leadership programs, providing students with more real-world experiences that connect classroom learning to their

communities. These strengthened collaborations will deepen the impact of civics education, fostering a generation of engaged, informed citizens.

Youth Empowerment and Civic Advocacy

Programs emphasizing youth leadership and empowerment have been highly effective, but there is an opportunity to focus more on civic advocacy. Teaching young people how to engage in policy advocacy, testify on legislation, and influence decision-makers will empower them to become agents of change in their communities. By expanding these initiatives, nonprofits, and schools can better prepare young people to take on active roles in shaping the future of Hawai‘i.

Ensuring Equity and Excellence in Civics

To close the gaps in civics education across Hawai‘i, stakeholders must work together to ensure that every student, regardless of background or school location, has access to the tools they need to participate meaningfully in civic life. By investing in civics education resources, expanding hands-on learning, and supporting high-quality professional development opportunities for teachers, Hawai‘i can build an inclusive, dynamic civics education system that prepares students to be leaders, advocates, and engaged citizens who contribute to the health and vitality of our democracy.

Innovative Resources and Approaches in Civics Education

The landscape of civics education is being transformed by groundbreaking resources and frameworks like [Educating for American Democracy](#) (EAD), which emphasizes an inquiry-based approach to civics that inspires students to ask tough questions and seek answers through research and classroom discussion. EAD’s innovative [Roadmap](#) and [Pedagogy Companion](#) weave history and civics together to help students cultivate civic honesty, celebrate democratic compromises, and inspire meaningful participation.

National nonprofits like [iCivics](#), the [Bill of Rights Institute](#), and state-level initiatives such as the [Illinois Civics Hub](#) and the [Lou Frey Institute](#) are developing comprehensive educational tools that not only teach the mechanics of government but also empower students to become active, thoughtful participants in their constitutional democracy. These resources are designed to be inclusive, vertically integrated across grade levels, and capable of inspiring a nuanced understanding of America's complex historical and contemporary civic landscape.

Charting the Future of Civic Engagement

The path forward for civics education in Hawai‘i is both challenging and promising. By embracing innovative approaches, strengthening partnerships, and committing to inquiry-based learning, Hawai‘i has an unprecedented opportunity to transform civics education from a traditional classroom subject into a dynamic, lived experience. The strategies outlined in this report—from targeted professional development to expanded hands-on learning and robust resource integration—represent a comprehensive approach to nurturing thoughtful and engaged citizens.

Civics education stands at the forefront of preparing young people not just to understand democracy, but to actively shape and sustain it. Together we can cultivate a generation of informed, passionate, and engaged citizens who are deeply connected to their communities and committed to the principles of democratic participation in Hawai‘i and beyond.

About the author

Colin D. Moore, Ph.D. is a political scientist and a member of the PACE Commission. He is the director of the Matsunaga Institute for Peace at the University of Hawai‘i and an associate professor at the University of Hawai‘i Economic Research Organization.

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TEACHING DEMOCRACY

Insights on Civics Education in
Hawai‘i’s Public Schools



A thriving democracy depends on well-informed, engaged citizens. In Hawai'i, where unique cultural and historical contexts shape civic life, understanding how civics is prioritized and taught is essential for ensuring that students develop the knowledge and skills necessary for informed engagement.

Recognizing the need to strengthen civic learning, the Hawai'i Supreme Court established the Commission to Promote and Advance Civic Education (PACE) in 2021. PACE aims to develop sustainable programs and resources that reflect the diverse needs of Hawai'i's population. While many

students graduate with a strong foundation in civic knowledge and engagement, others may feel less confident in their ability to participate effectively in civic life.

To better understand these dynamics, PACE and the Hawai'i State Department of

Education (HIDOE) conducted a comprehensive survey of 627 teachers and 168 administrators between October 2023 and April 2024. The survey explored how civics is prioritized, taught, and perceived in Hawai'i's public schools, identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement.

This research provides a basis for further discussion on how to ensure that civics education remains a meaningful and relevant part of the curriculum, equipping students with the tools they need to engage with the civic institutions that shape their communities.

Prioritization and Satisfaction

The survey revealed a misalignment between how teachers and administrators perceive the emphasis on civics education. While 48% of teachers consider civics a high or essential priority in their classrooms, only 32% believe it receives similar attention school-wide. Administrators, on the other hand, are more optimistic, with 44% viewing civics as a high priority across their schools.

Perceived Priority of Civics Education

	No or Low Priority	Somewhat of a Priority	High or Essential Priority
Administrators: "In Your School/Complex Area"	14%	42%	44%
Teachers: "In Your Classroom"	16%	36%	48%
Teachers: "In Your School"	27%	41%	32%

Satisfaction with Quality of Civics Teaching and Learning

	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Unsure	Satisfied or Very Satisfied
Administrators: "Your school or complex area"	14%	49%	36%
Teachers: "Your school"	26%	48%	26%

Teachers and administrators also have different perceptions about the quality of civics teaching and learning. Among administrators, 36% report being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of civics education, with only 14% expressing dissatisfaction. While 26% of teachers also report satisfaction, there is room for growth as nearly half (48%) remain uncertain about the quality of civics instruction in their schools.



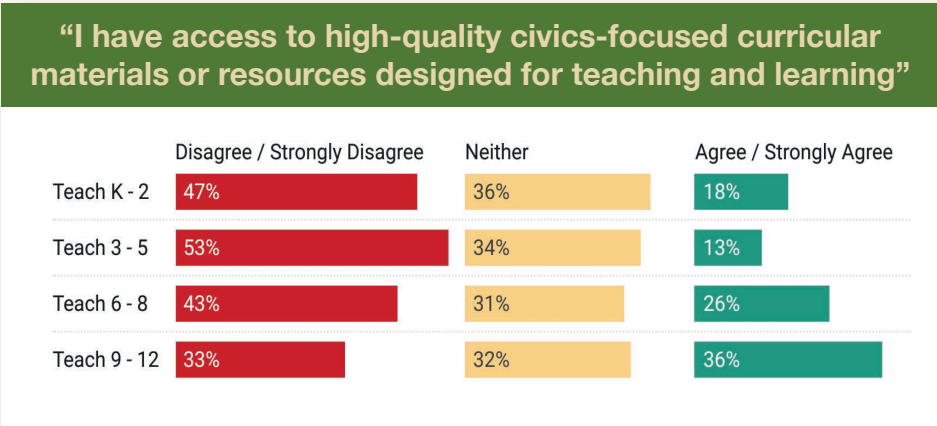
Challenges

Civics education in Hawai‘i’s public schools presents several key challenges that affect both administrators and teachers. For administrators, the primary concern is limited time in the curriculum, with 59% identifying this as a major obstacle to implementing civics

education. Teachers report similar challenges in the classroom. According to 56% of respondents, the greatest challenge is the pressure to cover other subjects, reducing the time available for civics instruction. Additionally, 54% of teachers cite insufficient

or outdated resources, while 46% report that many students lack the foundational knowledge needed to fully engage with civics concepts.

Access to high-quality, civics-focused materials is another major concern, particularly at the elementary level. Nearly half of all teachers (45%) stated that the resources available to them were inadequate, with the problem most acute in grades K-5. With only 13% of grades 3-5 and 18% of K - 2 teachers reporting that they have access to sufficient materials, this gap points to a clear area for investment, especially given the critical role elementary teachers play in building the foundation of civic understanding at an early age.



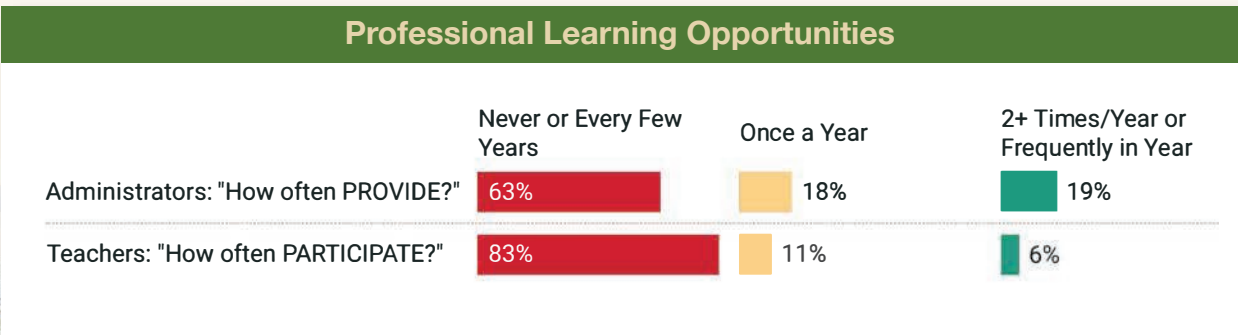
Professional Development Needs and Opportunities

Professional development plays a crucial role in strengthening civics education in Hawai‘i’s public schools. There is broad agreement among educators that the most pressing priority for professional development is improving the pedagogy of civics education, including best practices for fostering student engagement. Three-quarters of administrators and 71% of teachers identified this as the most important area for professional learning.

Other areas of need show some variation between the two groups. Service-learning, a teaching method that integrates community service with classroom instruction, was identified as important by 56% of administrators and 49% of teachers. Similarly, media and news literacy, a crucial skill in today’s digital age, was prioritized by 51% of administrators and 42% of teachers.

Unfortunately, the availability of civics-specific professional

development remains limited, posing a challenge to improving instruction. While 37% of administrators report offering such opportunities at least once a year, only 17% of teachers indicate that they participate that often. More critically, the majority of both groups responded “Never” or “Once every few years,” signaling a need for more regular and accessible opportunities.



Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Effective Practices

Despite the challenges, teachers have identified several effective strategies for engaging students in civics education:

Real-World Connections:

Integrating current events, news articles, and videos helps students relate civics concepts to their daily lives and communities. Teachers report that making issues relevant, whether through discussions or project-based explorations of real-world problems, significantly enhances student engagement and interest.

Project-Based Learning:

Hands-on, experiential learning approaches, such as problem-solving activities and civic process simulations (e.g., mock trials or debates), deepen student understanding. Allowing students to select topics of personal interest and develop projects around them further increases their investment in learning.

Interactive Approaches:

Incorporating digital media, visual aids, and arts-based strategies, such as drama and visual arts, helps make civics concepts more engaging and accessible. Teachers also highlight the effectiveness of class discussions, simulations, and role-playing exercises in fostering critical thinking and meaningful dialogue.

Recommendations

The survey reveals a consensus among teachers and administrators on the importance of civics education in preparing students for active participation in our democracy. Yet it also highlights key challenges that impact the effective delivery of this content, including limited classroom time, insufficient resources, and a lack of ongoing professional development. To address these challenges, the following key recommendations focus on strengthening civics instruction and ensuring students develop the knowledge and skills necessary for meaningful civic participation.

Expand Access to High-Quality Resources: High-quality, civics-focused curricular materials are particularly needed in the early grades, when students begin developing their understanding of civic life. Providing teachers with well-designed instructional resources will help create engaging and meaningful lessons that build a strong foundation of civic knowledge from an early age.

Enhance Professional Development Opportunities: Both teachers and administrators emphasize the need for more civics-specific training. Expanding access to regular professional development would help teachers stay current with best practices, including strategies for engaging students with current events and fostering critical thinking about democratic values. Additional training in effective pedagogical approaches would further strengthen civics instruction.

Foster Hands-On Civic Experiences: Many teachers already use effective instructional strategies, such as making connections to real-world issues, implementing project-based learning, and incorporating interactive activities like debates and discussions. Providing additional resources and training to support these methods will help ensure their consistent implementation across all grade levels.

Learn More

For the complete PACE report on civics education, including survey results from independent schools, an overview of civics standards, and opportunities for civic engagement through nonprofit organizations, please visit the PACE website or the HDOE website:

CivicsHawaii.org/ or HawaiiPublicSchools.org/



PACE

Commission to Promote and
Advance Civic Education

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (July 17, 2024 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from May 21, 2024 meeting
- II. Guest Speakers
 - Dr. Donna Phillips, President and CEO of the Center for Civic Education
 - Prof. Diana Owen, Director and Principal Investigator of the Civic Education Research Lab at Georgetown University
- III. PACE Annual Report (filed June 19, 2024)
- IV. Committee Updates
 - Committee on Civic Education in Schools
 - Committee on Civic Engagement
 - PACE website
- V. AJS/PACE Collaboration
- VI. Other Business
- VII. Next Meeting
 - August 20, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.

*Note: the June 18, 2024 meeting was not held due to scheduling conflicts.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (August 20, 2024 Meeting)

- I. Introduce new PACE Commissioner (OHA)
- II. Minutes from July 17, 2024 meeting
- III. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Budget request for the Hilo Law & Justice Academy
 - Website update
 - Civic Education Committee
- IV. ABA Resolution 401 (2022)
- V. Other Business
- VI. Next Meeting
 - September 17, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (September 17, 2024 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from August 20, 2024 meeting
- II. Introduce Ku‘uleianuhea “Anuheā” Awo-Chun (OHA Commissioner)
- III. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Website update
 - Civic Education Committee
- IV. Other Business
- V. Next Meeting
 - October 15, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (October 15, 2024 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from September 17, 2024 meeting
- II. Governor's Appointee
- III. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Hilo Law & Justice Academy
 - Website update
 - Civic Education Committee
 - Report on Civics Survey
- IV. Other Business
- V. Next Meeting
 - November 19, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA

(November 19, 2024 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from October 15, 2024 meeting
- II. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Civic Education Committee
- III. Kids Voting
- IV. Other Business
 - National Civics Bee
- V. Next Meeting
 - December 17, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (December 17, 2024 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from November 19, 2024 meeting
- II. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Youth Video Contest
 - Partner with Libraries
 - Civic Education Committee
 - Civics Survey report
- III. AJS/PACE Project
- IV. Other Business
 - Upcoming Legislative Session
 - Program Specialist II position
 - Civics Survey by AJS
- V. Next Meeting
 - January 21, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (January 28, 2025 Meeting¹)

- I. Minutes from December 17, 2024 meeting
- II. Welcome David Day
 - Governor's new appointee
- III. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Youth Video Contest update and judges
 - Partner with Libraries
 - Kauai Law and Justice Academy
 - Committee on Civic Education in Schools
 - Civics Survey report
 - Hawai'i Schools of Democracy ceremonies
- IV. Upcoming Legislative Session
 - [HB763](#) (Civic Education; Civic Education Trust Fund; Department of Education; Resource Teacher; Appropriation)
 - [HB1436](#) (Hawai'i Civics Collaborative; Aloha Spirit; Civics Education; Democracy; Positions; Appropriations)
- V. Program Specialist II position
- VI. Other Business
- VII. Next Meeting

¹ Meeting rescheduled from January 21, 2025.

- February 18, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (February 18, 2025 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from January 28, 2025 meeting
- II. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Youth Video Contest
 - Partner with Libraries
 - Kauai Law and Justice Academy
 - Committee on Civic Education in Schools
 - Civics Survey report
 - Hawai'i Schools of Democracy
- III. Representative Perruso
 - Civics Learning Week
 - Acknowledgment of five educators across the state
- IV. Legislative Session
 - HB763 passed by House Committee on Education
- V. Program Specialist II position
- VI. Other Business
- VII. Next Meeting
 - March 18, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (March 18, 2025 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from February 18, 2025 meeting
- II. New Commissioner and Program Specialist
 - Deanna D'Oliver for HAIS (effective April 3, 2025)
 - Keahe Davis - PACE Program Specialist
- III. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Committee on Civic Education in Schools
- IV. Civic Learning Week Floor Presentation
 - Recognition of five civics teachers
- V. Legislative Session
 - HB763
- VI. Other Business
 - Funds for Special Duty Officer at the March 27th event at UH West Oahu
 - Anthology - Recognition for work supporting PACE
- VII. Next Meeting
 - April 15, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (April 15, 2025 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from March 18, 2025 meeting
- II. Committee Updates
 - Civic Engagement Committee
 - Committee on Civic Education in Schools
- III. Other Business
 - Anthology - Recognition for work supporting PACE
- IV. Next Meeting
 - May 20, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

COMMISSION TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE CIVIC EDUCATION

AGENDA (May 20, 2025 Meeting)

- I. Minutes from the April 15, 2025, meeting
- II. Committee Updates
 - A. Civic Engagement Committee
 - B. Education Committee
- III. Program Specialist Projects
 - A. Proposal to join CivxNow Coalition
 - B. Annual Report for 2024-2025 (draft)
 - C. Tasks for student extern
 - 1. Lessons for Students - Engaging Court Cases
 - 2. Webinar ideas/draft for Constitution Day
 - 3. Social Media presence
 - 4. Solicit Additional Task Ideas
 - D. Summer Civics Institutes for Teachers with the Center for Civic Education
 - 1. Civics that Empowers All Students (CEAS) Cohort 3 - June 16-20, Monterey Bay, CA
 - 2. Project Community - July 7-11, Phoenix, AZ
 - 3. Elevating Unheard Perspectives - July 15-17, Virtual
 - E. Governor's Proclamation for Constitution Day
- IV. Other Business
 - A. Incorporating Student Voice
- V. Next Meeting
 - A. Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at noon (in-person)