



“Without a civics class...

...we will be doomed to repeat history”

-Stephany Trinidad, Youth Community Organizer, age 16

The current problem...

- Young people are not as engaged in civic life as in the past, “*about half of those aged 18-29 voted in the 1972 presidential election. By 1996, less than 1/3 of those aged 18-29 voted.*”*
- While young people are expected to become future civic and political leaders, and to work to better their communities, they are not taught the skills to assume those roles.
- Currently, secondary education does not address many of the pressing societal problems and needs that students and their families face on a daily basis
- Civics has not been required in Boston Public Schools since the 1970s

Civics is important because...

- Research shows a relationship between civics education and an increase in civic and political knowledge and engagement**
- Civics helps students understand their rights as members of a globalized society
- Civics provides the educational foundation for young people to engage with the world critically and to work to better their local communities and the world at large

WHAT WE WANT...

- A required civics curriculum for 11th or 12th grades in the Boston Public Schools
- Pilot classes in the Boston Public Schools by Fall 2008
- A BPS identified curriculum development team to construct the course with youth involvement

A 21st century civics class would include...

- Learning about the workings of our political system, current events, laws, politics, our history, and the history of movements for social, racial and economic justice
- Building students' skills to think critically about their role in the world and providing them with the resources to engage actively in their community.
- Interactive and engaging lesson plans that allow students to act as visionaries for the future, to take personal responsibility, and to work collectively toward shared goals.

“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms...” (From Article 26 b of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the international standard for the rights of every person, ratified by the US and nearly 190 other countries.)

For more information, or to get involved in the campaign, please contact the Youth Community Organizers (YCOs) of the Hyde Square Task Force, 617.318.6625 – www.hydesquare.org

The YCOs are a group of youth who act as a voice in the community on issues that concern them in their everyday lives by engaging other youth, participating in campaigns, and organizing to better the future

*From “Crafting Good Citizens” – Education Next, Spring 2004

**From “Civics Curriculum and Civic Skills: Recent Evidence” -CIRCLE, Melissa K. Comber, November, 2003