

# Minnesota Civic Education Coalition

**“Knowledge of our system of governance and our rights and responsibilities as citizens is not passed along through the gene pool. Each generation of Americans must be taught these basics.”** ~ Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor

## Preserving Minnesota’s History and Culture Heritage through Civic Education

Raising good citizens doesn't happen by chance. Just like we teach children to brush their teeth, eat healthy foods, exercise and get enough sleep, we also need to help them develop the knowledge, skills and motivation to participate in civic life.

Civic education provides citizens with knowledge about our system of government and the rights and responsibilities that are anchored in the history and documents that form our representative democracy. Our common civic cultural heritage unites all Minnesotans, regardless of who we are or where we are from.

***The Minnesota Civic Education Coalition\* is committed to preserving Minnesota’s civic heritage by teaching civic knowledge, skills and traditions to the next generation. With high voter turnout, honest elections and elected officials, and engaged citizens, Minnesota is the envy of other states. But this outcome doesn’t happen by accident.***



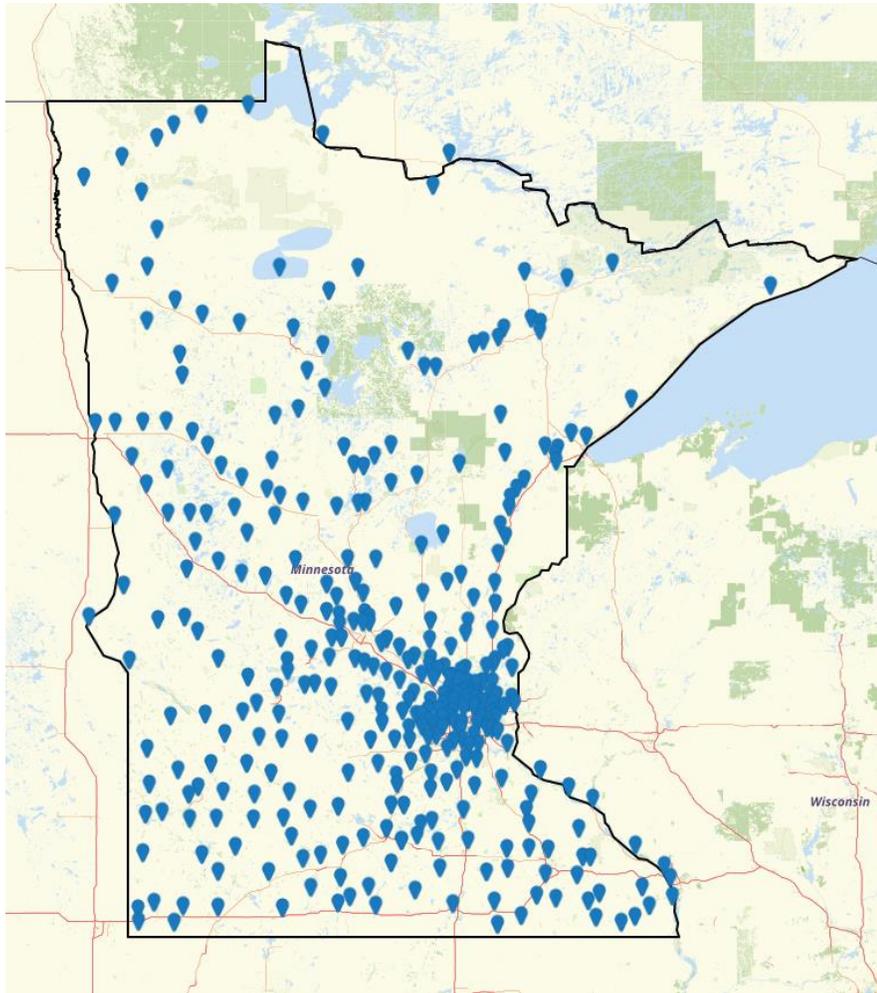
## 2024-2025 Request

The Minnesota Civic Education Coalition is requesting \$200,000 each year from the Legacy Committee, Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (HF2128). Funding will support civic education programs for the civic and cultural development of Minnesota youth ages 18 and under. Programming will focus on:

- The constitutional principles and the democratic foundation of our national, state and local institutions;
- The political processes and structures of government, grounded in the understanding of constitutional government and individual rights;
- The development of skills needed to be engaged and effective participants in today’s public life.

\* The Minnesota Civic Education Coalition includes the Learning, Law & Democracy Foundation, YMCA Center for Youth Voice and Youth in Government. For more information, contact [amy.anderson@ymcamn.org](mailto:amy.anderson@ymcamn.org).

# Who Does the Minnesota Civic Education Coalition Serve?



During the past two years, the Minnesota Civic Education Coalition has delivered programming in more than 400 Minnesota communities and supported civic learning for thousands of K-12 students statewide. Notable outcomes include:

- MN teachers and parents accessed government and civics lessons via [www.teachingcivics.org](http://www.teachingcivics.org) more than 16,000 times. This represents a 61% increase fueled by the need for distance learning resources.
- Helping to place more than 1,500 student election judges in the 2022 election.
- Providing an authentic, 2022 Election-day voting experience for 100,000 K-12 students in 300 schools statewide.
- Delivering professional development to more than 200 educators.
- Leading programs for more than 2,000 middle- and high-school students to serve in model governments at the state, local, national and international levels.
- Providing the opportunity for more than 600 middle- and high-school students to develop their advocacy skills and practice them during one-on-one meetings with their local elected officials.

“ The whole school participated in Students Voting. Every student felt like their voice was heard and it validated their belief in the process. It was a great experience for them to be able to practice being responsible citizens so that one day when they grow up, they will be prepared to participate in the political process. ”



~ Greater MN middle school teacher



# Select Minnesota Civic Education Coalition Programs



## Super Civics

Super Civics recognizes the opportunity presented to K-8 teachers and their students to start building their toolboxes for civic learning. Each building block is essential to prepare a young person for a rigorous civic education in high school and full participation in the American experiment in democracy as an adult.

Super Civics connects teachers with tested lessons and strategies in the toolbox, as well as deepens their own knowledge of our system of government and the rights and responsibilities of the people who are charged with running it.

## Youth in Government (YIG)

YIG is a hands-on civic learning program where students in grades 8-12 become legislators, lawyers, judges, lobbyists, the media, or cabinet members and spend four days running a state model government in the MN Capitol Complex.

Students meet in delegations throughout the fall to learn about state government and their program areas. They come together with more than 1,200 other students from across the state in January to elect their own leaders, debate their own ideas and build a vision for a strong state.



## Respectful Conversations in Schools

Democratic societies thrive on discussion, dissent and debate. Too often, however, our society provides poor role models for young people trying to learn the skills to be effective, active and responsible participants in that democratic society.

The Respectful Conversations in Schools (RCS) protocol is designed to provide teachers and students with a tool for talking about important current issues while enhancing classroom culture and learning outcomes.

RCS has been shown to increase students' leadership and social emotional learning skills, as well as strengthen competencies for success in college, career and civic life.