South Dakota Three Year State Plan to Support Effective Civics K-12 Education Draft

Background:

Since 2015, as a response to a national focus on civics education, over 23 states have worked to enhance civics education in their schools. Governor Noem has also advocated to further enhance Civics Education in South Dakota to create active, aware, and informed citizens through opportunities like stronger social studies educational programs, and hands-on civics learning.

In July 2019, the South Dakota Department of Education continued the South Dakota civics education initiative. During this time, the department hosted a Civics Summit in Pierre. Attendees included educators and administrators from K-12 and higher education, and the director of the Office of Indian Education. The purpose of the summit was to gain insight and gather feedback from educators to assist in the development of a long-range plan focused on ensuring quality K-12 social studies and civics education.

In October 2019, stakeholders gathered to determine goals and action steps for South Dakota's Civics Education Plan. The South Dakota civics education goals focus on identifying the needs of South Dakota civics educators. These goals will direct efforts and provide opportunities for educators to share and learn from one another. The plan's additional focus on recognizing and incentivizing creativity and innovation in schools will promote strong civics education efforts across the state.

South Dakota's Civics Education Definition:

Civics education is the knowledge, practice, and skills from geography, history, economics, government, and the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings which provide the foundational virtues needed to be moral and involved citizens.

The South Dakota Department of Education is committed to ensuring that South Dakota students graduate from the K-12 system prepared to actively participate in society at all levels—local, tribal, regional, state, and national—as informed and engaged citizens. High-quality civics education is crucial to achieving this outcome. The department is working with a stakeholder group to develop strategies for enhancing civics education in the state.

Proposed Goals:

1. Determine the needs of South Dakota civics education.
2. Establish a network of teachers and out of school partnerships for educators to share experiences and resources.
3. Understand and recognize Civics Education efforts across the state.
4. Build capacity of educators to implement knowledge-rich Civics instruction.

Outcomes:

Short Term Outcomes
    ● Social Studies unpacked standards resource documents are revised and shared in ways to support vertical alignment and effective grade-level Social Studies instruction that integrate history, civics, economics, geography, and the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings.
    ● Educators will effectively utilize South Dakota's standards for civics education within their lesson plans.
    ● Educators will be aware of the broad range of civic organizations and resources that support student civic development and participation.
Intermediate Outcomes
    ● Schools will be recognized for implementing quality civics instruction.
    ● Social Studies educators have multiple opportunities to participate in professional development to support their work with students.
    ● Educators feel opportunities for professional development are valuable.
    ● Teachers will increase their confidence in implementing knowledge-rich instruction to enhance student experiences with civics education.
Long Term Outcomes
    ● Educators, who come from diverse contexts, participate in professional development and networking opportunities.
    ● Through civics education, students will gain the knowledge and experiences to actively participate in school, community, tribal, and national civics-related organizations and activities.

GOALS	Implementation Steps	Timeline			
What are long-term visions for Civics?	What smaller pieces will be used to achieve the goal?	SY 2019-20	SY 2020-21	SY 2021-22	SY 2022-23
1). Determine K-12 educator and school needs in order to support implementation of engaging knowledge rich civics education.	1A.Create a survey specifically for teachers.	x		x	
	1B.Determine current practices as well as changes occurring in civics education across the nation, especially South Dakota.	x	x	x	x
	1C. Conduct listening sessions.	x	x		
	1D. Create a civics education advisory board.	x			
	1E.Review progress of goals and determine future next steps.				x
2).Establish a network of teachers and out of school partnerships for educators to share experiences and resources.	2A.Identify and establish relationships with educational partners (example: SD Historical Society, SD Geography/Discovery Center, Chiesman Foundation) to support SD teachers in their implementation of the civics education goals.	x	x	x	x

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	2B. Identify, expand and utilize communication tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Listserv groups, teacher networks, etc, to share civics resources.	x	x	x	x
3). Understand and recognize civics education efforts across the state.	3A. Annually highlight schools in DOE publications for their efforts in enhancing civics education.		x	x	x
	3B. Identify and form partnerships with local government agencies and groups to increase internships, ROTC programs, and other Civics involvement opportunities for students.		x	x	
	3C. Create a Civics Education Award for Schools			x	x
4). Build the capacity of educators to implement engaging knowledge-rich civics instruction	4A. Revise current unpacked Social Studies standards	x			
	4B. Host social studies/civics education training.		x	x	x
	4C. Partner with the Office of Tribal Relations to provide training to implement OSEUS into civics education.	x	x	x	x
	4D. Provide tools and guidance to support schools in implementing engaging, knowledge-rich civics instruction.		x	x	x
	4E. Work with educators to locate and review civics education resources (such as museums and historical societies) currently available to educators.	x	x	x	x