

Amicus brief submitted by National Scholars and Researchers: The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), The Civic Engagement Research Group, The Lou Frey Institute, and Professors David Campbell, Peter Levine and Sam Wineburg

*This brief contains up-to-date studies and research literature that establishes precisely how civic education can adequately prepare students for capable citizenship in the 21st century.*

Amidst extreme political polarization and proliferation of one-sided and false information via the internet and social media, there is sweeping, bipartisan support for civic education in schools. However, the dismal state of civic education in the US has led to alarmingly low levels of basic civic knowledge among American students. *Amici* have extensively studied the civic education necessary to prepare students to become capable citizens who can function productively in the US democratic political process. Their brief spells out fundamental aspects of a civic education, which rests on four pillars: civic knowledge, civic skills, civic experiences, and civic values, together with up-to-date summaries of the research supporting each of these categories.

*Civic knowledge* includes not only understanding government, history, law and democracy but broader areas such as world languages, economics, science, and the arts. *Civic skills* include the ability to deliberate with people who hold varying views on controversial topics, to participate in methods of civic engagement, and to effectively analyze media and utilize the internet in socially responsible ways. *Civic experiences* such as extracurricular activities, community service, and student government show students how politics and government work in practice and how civic participation can influence social and political outcomes. Learning *civic values* such as respect for the rule of law and concern for the rights and welfare of others contributes to an environment for productive civic participation especially in complex and divisive times. Each aspect of civic education is essential to prepare students to meaningfully participate as citizens in the democratic system upon which American was founded. Affording all students, not just those in affluent schools, this civic education is necessary to ensure a flourishing US democracy for generations to come.