Civic Education Grant - Request for Applications

The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) invites Supervisory Unions/Supervisory Districts (SUs/SDs) to complement and/or amplify their existing secondary school curricula by providing students an innovative learning opportunity on the history and principles of U.S. constitutional democracy as evidenced through voting. The AOE is competing funds to support schools who want to purchase, as part of curricula to support civic literacy, *Our Unfinished March* by former United States Attorney General Eric Holder, and have their students participate in an event where they will hear from and talk with Mr. Holder at The Flynn Center for Arts on May 16, 2023. The AOE will provide supplemental learning materials aligned to the College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards to support this learning opportunity. This short-duration, competitive grant opportunity will make awards of up to $10,000 or less. A total of $150,000 are available for award.

Application Due Date: December 12, 2022
Anticipated Grant Duration: June 30, 2023
Number of Awards: Number of awards will be determined by number of applications received and available funding.

For additional information, contact:
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Civic Education Grant Application

I. Introduction and Background

In order to support SUs/SDs in providing Vermont students the experience of participating in an engaging and academically rich Civic and U.S. History education curriculum, the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) invites SUs/SDs to complement and/or amplify their existing secondary school curricula by providing students an innovative learning opportunity on the history and principles of U.S. constitutional democracy through the lens of voting. The AOE is competing funds to support schools who want to purchase, as part of curricula to support civic literacy, *Our Unfinished March* by former United States Attorney General Eric Holder, and have their students participate in an event where they will hear from and talk with Mr. Holder at The Flynn Center for Arts on May 16, 2023.

This opportunity highlights the importance of literacy within the social studies, and connected literacies such as civic, media, ethical and equity literacy. According to the National Council for Social Studies, social studies learning "must provide students with the information and skills to construct deeper meaning of their local, state, national and global communities as well as provide a sense of existence in the past, as well as the present, [an] understanding of the multiplicity of cultures within society, [and a knowledge of] the institutions within the society." Individuals literate in social studies can identify evidence-based claims from narrower and/or personal opinions and develop the means to communicate (digitally, orally and in writing) and take action on what has been learned. Social studies literacy helps students develop a critical lens through which they challenge inequitable systems of access, power, and privilege, and become socio-politically conscious and socio-culturally responsive. Students literate in social studies recognize the legacy of sovereignty, authority, and power (civics); the pros and cons of human-environment interaction (geography); the value of development (including both the benefits and the costs that it incurs (economics); and the respect for all histories, both past and present, as seen from multiple perspectives.

Teaching students to become independent thinkers and learners who can remember and reuse what they have read to gather meaning, think critically, and solve problems is part of literacy, which involves not only reading, but speaking, listening, viewing, and understanding all forms of communication. (*Embedding Literacy Strategies in Social Studies for Eighth-Grade Students,* Journal of Social Studies Education Research)

Data from this *Embedding Literacy Strategies in Social Studies for Eighth-Grade Students* research identified the positive connections between literacy and social studies within student achievement, motivation, and engagement:

- The observed increase in student achievement is consistent with previous research by Bean and Dagan (2010), who found that effective literacy strategies

are proven methods for improving instruction, achievement, and assessment. The findings also agree with Kent and Simpson (2008) who found that integrating literacy strategies increased students' achievement in social studies and strengthened skills that affect achievement in future social science classes.

- Findings are consistent with Reed (2009), who determined that using literacy strategies to make class experiences more relevant to students' interests, everyday life, or important current events motivates students because meaningful learning is taking place.
- Findings are consistent with Gross (2010), who concluded that using literacy strategies is a means for enhancing student engagement and is a viable way for helping students learn.

According to Educating for American Democracy, further studies regarding the link between literacy and social studies are currently taking place by Joe Kahne and Erica Hodgins of the Civic Engagement Research Group and Jane Lo of Michigan State University; a brief will be published in the coming months.

On January 29, 2019, H.R.849 was introduced into the House of Representatives with the aim of amending a 1965 education act by increasing civic education in public schools. Congress enumerated the following as support for this bill:

Congress finds the following:

> (1) The dearth of civics lessons available to students across the United States has helped to foster a political climate that is deeply partisan and divided.
>
> (2) Polarized party politics in the United States has fractured public morale in our institutions and has created an environment in which people are less likely to be well-informed on the current state of affairs and to participate in the political process.
>
> (3) According to the Annenberg Constitution Day Civics Survey conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania—
>
>> (A) in 2018, only 32 percent of people in the United States surveyed were capable of naming all 3 branches of Government, while 33 percent of Americans were not able to name any of the branches of government;
>> (B) in 2018, 30 percent of people in the United States surveyed knew that the Senate is in charge of Supreme Court nominee confirmations; and
>>
>> (C) in 2017, 37 percent could not name any of the rights guaranteed under the First Amendment.

(4) In 2014, only 23 percent of eighth graders were found to have performed at or above the proficient level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress civics exam conducted by the National Center of Education Studies.

(5) A lack of knowledge on the basics of the structure of our democratic republic creates an increasingly ill-prepared electorate which overtime has, and will continue to, contribute to a weakened democracy.

Vermont's student-centered learning framework (i.e., proficiency-based, personalized and focused on student agency) supports diverse pathways to and assessments of civic proficiency and content literacy. The College, Career and Civic Life C3 State Standards for Social Studies (C3) focuses on three Dimensions -- inquiry, evidence, and taking action -- in addition to the dimension of testable content knowledge. These three areas allow for the development of transferable skills and make learning engaging, as students "make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world" (C3).

II. Grant Purpose and Details

The intent of this grant is to

- foster an engaging Civic and U.S. History education opportunity which highlights the importance of literacy within the social studies;
- engage students in contemporary texts to build contextual knowledge for successful participation in an author Q & A process, as well as completion of supplemental learning resources;
- share with the community a Vermont focus on civic education; and
- engender civic literacy and cultivate a commitment to civic engagement in Vermont students.

These grant funds can be used to cover the cost of:

a. Copies of *Our Unfinished March* for participating students and educators;
b. Transportation and personal services (e.g., substitutes, etc.) costs related to the May 16, 2023 education event with Eric Holder at the Flynn in Burlington, Vermont on May 16, 2023.

Through a competitive grant process, awards will be granted to SU/SDs that show the greatest promise for incorporating the teaching and learning of the history and principles of U.S. constitutional democracy as evidenced through voting into existing curriculum and aligned to C3 standards. Each grant recipient will:

1. Commit to student learning through AOE-provided supplemental learning materials to support the reading of *Our Unfinished March* and follow-up participation at the Eric Holder event in May (preferably in-person but virtual participation may be available);
2. Develop student/school team questions for Eric Holder as part of the Q&A during the event (submission details will be determined and communicated to awardees well in advance of the event);
3. Collaborate with the Vermont AOE, and communicate the status of goals and deliverables on a monthly basis;
4. Provide evidence of alignment to equitable and culturally sustaining curriculum, as applicable; and,
5. Develop and/or sustain a plan for social studies literacy goals.

The total amount available for this grant opportunity is $150,000.00. The number of awards will be based on total available funds and the number of eligible applications. Grant applications will be reviewed by the Agency of Education after the December 12, 2022, application deadline. Approved grants may be fully or partially funded. The final award will be determined by the reviewers.

III. Vermont Agency of Education Funding Priorities

This competitive grant will support a project that:

1. Demonstrates sufficient capacity to complement student learning through the AOE- provided supplemental learning resources to support the reading of *Our Unfinished March* and follow-up participation of in-person Q & A;
2. Identifies how this grant is a complement to, and/or enhances, the school's current focus on civic education;
3. Provides evidence of alignment to equitable and culturally sustaining curriculum, as applicable; and,
4. Develops a sustainability plan for continued civic education and literacy goals within social studies.

IV. Project Award and Timeline

The grant period is projected to begin on January 3, 2023 (or upon execution of the grant agreements) and expire on June 30, 2023, with the expectation that program objectives are met and all reporting and monitoring requirements are successfully fulfilled. The grantee is expected to provide a plan, timeline, and budget request for the identified grant activity period.

Timeline

Grant Application Released: November 15, 2022
Application Deadline: December 12, 2022
Awards announced: December 19, 2022
Anticipated Grant Duration: June 30, 2023
Number of Awards: Number of awards will be determined by number of applications received and available funding.

V. Application Requirements

The narrative sections of the application must be double-spaced, and the font must not be smaller than 12-point and **shall not exceed 10 pages**. **Please use the templates provided in the appendices for the grant narrative, budget, and budget justification, and contact information.** Each application must contain the following sections:

1. **Grant Narrative (See Appendix A for Grant Narrative Template):**
    a. Project Description and Justification: A concise description of the how the grant-supported opportunity supports civic education within the school, which includes:

        i. How this opportunity can support intended civic and content literacy outcomes for students (how does this align with, expand and/or support current curriculum?);
        ii. How this opportunity will support SU/SD goals for an equitable and culturally sustaining curriculum, as applicable;
        iii. A description of the measures that will be used to determine student learning outcomes (i.e., formative and summative assessment data/examples culled from AOE-developed Inquiry Design Model resource);
        iv. Strategies to sustain civic education learning and develop/sustain social studies literacy goals; and,
        v. Intended strategies for communication with a the AOE, including a final report to the AOE, and any stakeholders**.**

    b. Scope and Sequence:
        i. **Project Goals, Plan, Timeline, and Benchmarks:** Provide a concise description of goals, number of participants and students to be served, an achievable plan and timeline, and monthly project benchmarks. This scope and sequence must be developed for the time period between January 3, 2023 (or upon execution of the grant

agreements) and June 30, 2023.

2901. <u>Budget and Budget Justification</u>: (See Appendix B for the Budget and Budget Justification Template)

a. Include a detailed budget for up to $10,000.00; and
b. Provide a budget justification that is clearly tied to the scope and sequence of the project.

2902. <u>Contact Information</u>: (See Appendix C for Contact Information Templates)

a. Name, address, phone number, and email information for Lead Grant Contact and Business Manager. (Please see Appendices A and B)

2903. <u>Evaluation to be submitted by July 15, 2023</u>:

a. Project Evidence and Final Evaluation Plan: A detailed description of how the project goals were met, measures of success, as well as any challenges that were encountered. Additionally, the final evaluation will include:

2904. <u>An explanation for how this work will be sustained.</u>

Application Submission and Review

A. Submission: Applicants must submit an original copy signed by an authorized institutional official to martha.deiss@vermont.gov at the Vermont Agency of Education. Electronic signatures will be accepted. To be considered for funding, original signed applications must be received at the Vermont Agency of Education by 4:00 PM on December 12, 2022. Applications submitted by mail or hand-delivered should be sent to:

Martha Deiss
Student Pathways
Vermont Agency of Education
1 National Life Drive, Davis 5
Montpelier VT 05620-2501

VII: The Review Process

A review panel will evaluate the eligible applications in accordance with the required application components.

Criteria	Points
Project Description and Justification	40
Scope and Sequence	35
Budget and Budget Justification	25

Score	Scoring Guide: Criteria are awarded a score of 1 to 20, with 20 being the highest. We offer the following as a guide to assist you.
16-20 = Excellent	The proposal demonstrates the highest level of thinking, capacity, or impact. The content of the responses is exemplary in this particular criteria area and could be an example to others.
11-15 = Good	Exhibits ideas that will affect positive change. While the criteria are not fully addressed, the responses are thoughtful and striving for effectiveness.
6-10 = Fair	Gaps are apparent. Criteria are not addressed fully. Responses lack detail.
0-5 = Poor	Weaknesses are apparent in the criteria; the question is not addressed, or the logic is faulty.

The Agency reserves the right to award in full or in part, to reject any and all applications in whole or in part, and to waive technical defects, irregularities or omissions if, in its judgement, the best interest of students would be served. After receiving the application, the Agency reserves the right not to award a grant, to negotiate specific grant amounts and to select certain grantees regardless of points awarded as part of the process to meet federal requirements or State Board of Education priorities.

VIII. Award Administration

A. **Notification of the Award:** The Lead Contact will be notified of the status of their application within two weeks after the application deadline.

B. **Reporting Requirements:** The Lead Contact will provide quarterly updates on progress to a designated staff person at the Agency of Education.

Appendix A: Grant Narrative Template

The narrative sections of the application must be double-spaced, and the font must not be smaller than 12-point and **shall not exceed 10 pages**. Each application must contain the following sections:

a. **Project Description and Justification** (40 Points): A detailed description of the project that:

1. Demonstrates sufficient capacity to complement student learning through AOE-provided supplemental learning resources, and other the appropriate learning opportunities, if applicable, to support the reading of *Our Unfinished March* and follow-up participation of in-person Q & A;
2. Identifies how this grant aligns with, supports, and/or enhances, the school's curriculum and/or a current focus on civic education, and how civic education learning will be sustained;
3. Provides evidence of alignment to equitable and culturally sustaining curriculum, as applicable;
4. Describes the measures that will be used to determine successful implementation of the learning and student outcomes of this opportunity;
5. Develops and/or sustains a plan for civic education and social studies literacy goals; and,
6. Details strategies for communication with the AOE, including a final report to the AOE, and any stakeholders**.**

Project Description and Justification:

b. **Scope and Sequence:** (35 Points) This scope and sequence must be developed for the time period between January 3, 2023 (or upon execution of the grant agreements) and June 30, 2022.
    - **Project Goals, Plan, Timeline, Participants, and Deliverable Products (see below):**
        - Provide a clear description of goals, including participants and the number of students that will be served:
        - Include an achievable plan with supporting activities and timeline; and
        - Identify monthly project deliverables

Scope and Sequence:

Timeline	Goal/Purpose	Description of Activity	Participants	Deliverable Product
Example: *December*	*Student learning*	*Order books*	*Teacher of record and business manager*	*Student learning*

Appendix B: Budget and Budget Justification

Budget Template: (25 Points) This form is a **required element** of the grant application. Justification for each of the categories shall be included in the **budget narrative** portion of the application. The funding request can be up to $10,000.

The cost of books should be calculated based on the following purchase price numbers included below:

QUANTITY	PRICE
1 – 24	$22.40
25 – 99	$17.36
100 – 249	$16.80
250 – 499	$16.24
500 +	$15.96

Functions	Salaries (100)	Employees Benefits (200)	Professional and Technical Services (300) Consultants Contracts	Other Purchased Services (500) Travel Printing	Supplies (600) Food Books Periodicals	Miscellaneous Expenditures (800) Subgrants, Dues, and Fees	Total
2213 – Instructional Staff Training							
2219 – Other Improvement of Instruction Services							
2290 – Other Support Services – Instructional Staff							
2715- Field Trips (Education related)							
2901-Other Support Services							
Total							

Appendix C: Contact Information

	Superintendent
Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	
Signature	

Lead Grant Contact

Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	
Signature	

Business Manager

Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	
Signature	