

Civic Engagement Experiences

As part of the mandated Civics graduation requirement for the state of Illinois, students must complete civic engagement experiences. Some of us do this regularly with our families, clubs, friends or religious groups, but others of us have not had this experience. One of the most powerful things a person can do is step outside of his/her comfort zone and engage with others politically. It teaches us about the greater world and about ourselves.

Here is some background on what the [Illinois State Bill](#) requires for high school Civics courses:

The civic engagement experience should include one or more of the following:

- Focus intentionally on civic outcomes and encourages civic commitment where students conduct research and analyze data related to their service;
- Foster increased student knowledge of the community;
- Prepare students for service in the community, including an understanding of the service sites, populations, and their individual responsibilities;
- Engage participants in meaningful and personally-relevant service activities that are available to all students regardless of academic skill or ability;
- Promote understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants; and
- Provide youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service learning experiences with guidance from adults

Some of the criteria we at DHS have come up with for our courses includes the following.

- Students may not receive any credit or pay for these experiences (*Exception for election judges*).
- Civic engagement required by another class or mandated by the courts cannot count.
- Civic engagement should require interaction with community members, as opposed to simply completing or filing paperwork, and if a service activity should also be completed with and verified by non-family members.
- We will not approve civic engagement for any organization which does not open its membership to the general public, or which discriminates in any way on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.
- Your civic engagement experience may not be completed during the school day; we do not approve or encourage you to miss school for this experience.

A list of possible opportunities follows. In general, civic engagement opportunities might include:

- Volunteering for political campaign
 - Any generally recognized political party or independent candidate
- Attending a protest march or rally
- Attending a School Board Meeting
- Working with any state, local, federal or regional governmental agency
- Lobbying (in person, via phone, social media, etc.)
- Attending a court proceeding

IMPORTANT: The first activity and its write up must be completed and submitted to turnitin by Friday, December 5. As soon as you decide what experience you are going to attend, *you must fill out this [form](#) describing what you plan to do and when*. While you may attend an experience with another student, all written work must be your own!

ASSIGNMENT

For each experience, you must do some work before, during, and after the experience.

Before: Why are you choosing this experience? To answer this question fully, you should address the following in your pre-experience writing:

1. Why are you interested in this particular experience?
2. What are you hoping to achieve through this experience?
3. What questions or concerns do you have prior to this experience?

This should be at least 2-3 paragraphs in length.

During: What's happening?

1. You **MUST** attend your civic engagement experience in person (no "virtual" experiences). Take pictures of yourself at your experience! You must be in the pictures!! You will submit your pictures with your final write-up.
2. Take detailed notes about the experience. Please take detailed notes! Imagine you are taking notes for someone who isn't there. You will submit your notes with your final write-up.

After: What happened?

1. Write a detailed description of your experience.
 - a. What kinds of things did you do while you participated? Include specific examples.
 - b. Write about some of the people who were present and what they did (staff, other volunteers, observers, etc.). Use specific details and examples.
2. Discuss what you learned about citizenship and civic responsibility as it relates to your experience.
 - a. What issues were addressed?
 - b. How did you make a difference in your community through your work?
3. Explain how this experience might relate to issues studied in class, current events or other connection. For example:
 - a. What political or public policy issues did you encounter during your experience? Explain.
 - b. What connections to class curriculum were evident? If none, consider what other connections you can make Explain.
4. How did this experience impact you personally? Be specific and thorough in your response.

This should be at least 3-4 paragraphs in length.

EXPERIENCES

Below are suggested Civic Engagement Experiences. Some of your fellow DHS students assisted in the creation of these suggested experiences!

We have tried to include dates and times of meetings, if possible and applicable. MAKE SURE YOU CHECK THE WEBSITE AND/OR CALL AHEAD FOR THESE EXPERIENCES TO CONFIRM DATES AND TIMES! YOUR EXPERIENCE MUST TAKE PLACE IN PERSON>

Activity	Location, date(s) and time(s)	What are some things I can do there?	Contact Info and any special info
1) Attend school board meeting	District 113 Meetings 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month at the Administration Building (1040 Park Ave. West), 7-10 pm	Find out the agenda ahead of time Prepare Citizen's Comments to participate	Board of Education Website Be alert-- sometimes the meeting is changed to a different location/date
2) Attend a protest/meeting/demonstration	To be determined - check social media and local media outlets for information	Make a poster connected to the issue Connect with protest leaders if possible and appropriate	https://www.protestchicago.com/ Please speak to your teacher and share protest information before doing this experience
3) Village Hall Meeting	Riverwoods Village Hall 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 7:30pm	Listen to the meeting, ask questions, talk to village personnel before or after	http://riverwoods-il.net/Government/trustee.html
4) Join a campaign	Various locations throughout our city, county, and state	Listen, talk about political issues with a representative, truly get your voice heard, ask questions, help with outreach	Contact US Congressional or Illinois campaigns directly for more information.
5) Attend Sustainability Commission Meeting	Village Hall 850 Waukegan Road Deerfield, IL 60015 Regular Meetings, 7 P.M. on the 3rd Thursday of every month.	Take note of the agenda that is posted 48 hours before each meeting. Contribute your own views and comments if allowed.	http://www.deerfield.il.us/458/Sustainability-Commission NOTE-THEY ARE VERY INCONSISTENT SOMETIMES CANCELING WITH NO NOTICE

6) Plan Commission Meeting	<p>Franz Council Chambers</p> <p>Village Hall 850 Waukegan Road Deerfield, IL 60015</p> <p>Meetings: 7:30 P.M. 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month.</p>	<p>Listen to the public hearing that may regard: Amendments to the comprehensive plan, other land use issues, planned unit developments, special uses, subdivisions and tax amendments.</p>	http://www.deerfield.il.us/395/Plan-Commission
7) Village Center Commission	<p>Community Conference Room</p> <p>Village Hall 850 Waukegan Road Deerfield, IL 60015</p> <p>Meetings: 7:30 P.M. 1st Wednesday of the month</p>	<p>Participate by generating ideas for promoting downtown Deerfield, advocating for Village Center businesses and more.</p>	http://www.deerfield.il.us/396/Village-Center-Commission
8) Deerfield Park District Board Meeting	<p>Jewett Park Community Center, 836 Jewett Park Drive</p> <p>See website for dates</p>	<p>People share their thoughts about the policies in Deerfield and propose new ones.</p>	http://www.deerfieldparks.org/about-us/board-meetings/
9) Attend a Village of Bannockburn meeting	<p>Bannockburn Village Hall</p> <p>See website for dates</p>	<p>Listen to people propose ideas and learn about the decisions being made and debated within the Village of Bannockburn.</p>	https://bannockburn.org/calendar/category/village-meetings/
10) Volunteer at Tenth Dems	<p>Meetings throughout the 10th District Area</p>	<p>Work on Democratic campaigns and outreach</p>	https://act.myngp.com/Forms/-9177210140674228224
11) Volunteer at Lake County Republicans	<p>Various opportunities throughout the county</p>	<p>Work on Republican campaigns and outreach</p>	http://lakecountyrepublicans.com/
12) Attend Highland Park City Council Meetings	<p>HP city council 1707 St Johns Avenue Highland Park, Illinois 60035</p> <p>2nd and 4th Mondays @ 7:30pm</p>	<p>See what problems there are in the community and how they go about solving them</p>	https://www.cityhpil.com/government/mayor_and_city_council/council_meeting_agendas_and_minutes.php

13) Attend a Village of Deerfield Board of Trustees meeting	Village of Deerfield 2nd Floor Robert D. Franz Council Chambers 850 Waukegan Road Deerfield, IL 60015 1st & 3rd Mondays of each month, 7:30 pm	See what problems there are in the community and how they go about solving them	http://www.deerfield.il.us/
14) Attend a Bannockburn school board meeting	Bannockburn school (K-8)	Listen to what happens in school politics, the ideas proposed, and the issues that are talked about; ask questions	http://www.bannockburnschool.org/district/school_board_meeting_dates/
15) Attend a West Deerfield Township Trustees meeting	West Deerfield Township 601 Deerfield Road, Deerfield IL 60015	Prepare questions and/or comments for the board, take notes during the meeting	http://www.westdeerfieldtownship.org
16) Attend a village of Deerfield Appearance Review Commission Meeting	Village Hall 850 Waukegan Road Deerfield, IL 60015 7:30 pm, every 4th Monday of each month.	Listen to a meeting that discusses appearance building code and makes decisions on the “appearance” or architecture/landscape of any business, residential home etc. in Deerfield.	http://www.deerfield.il.us/393/Appearance-Review-Commission-ARC
17) Plan a public educational event	Host a congressperson at the high school to discuss their views on current policy.	Reach out to government representatives to figure out who would be willing to speak and make a plan	See websites of your representatives/senators for contact information
18) Attend a court hearing	Lake County courthouse 18 N County St, Waukegan, IL 60085 Monday-Friday 8am-5pm	Watch how the judicial system protects our liberties	http://www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us/1475/Court-Calendars

If you have an idea that is not on this list, please see your teacher for proposal and approval requirements.
We hope you enjoy and learn from your experiences!