



# Center for Civic Education

5145 Douglas Fir Road • Calabasas, CA 91302-1440 • 818-591-9321 • [www.civiced.org](http://www.civiced.org)

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**For Information Contact:  
Ted McConnell: 202-861-8800 or  
Karen Whitaker: 818-591-9321**

## **NATIONAL STUDY REVEALS CIVICS DEFICIT IN U.S. SCHOOLS**

The National Assessment Governing Board released the 2006 study on civics by the National Assessment of Educational Progress at a press conference today at the Old State House in Boston. “The Nation’s Report Card” is the only nationally representative, continuing evaluation of the condition of education in the United States and has served as a national yardstick of student achievement since 1969.

“America’s school children are woefully unprepared to take their place as informed, engaged citizens,” said Charles N. Quigley, executive director of the Center for Civic Education, in response to NAEP’s “The Nation’s Report Card: Civics 2006.”

“The fact that only a little over 24 percent (aggregate of three grade levels) of students tested were able to achieve a proficient score on this important national measure is hardly surprising given the narrowing of the curriculum and testing that focuses on a few subjects to the exclusion of all others,” Quigley added. “Our system of public education was founded with the twin goals of preparing each generation for the workplace and active citizenship. Today’s report demonstrates we have lost sight of educating the citizen in favor of concentrating on preparing the worker.”

“The Nation’s Report Card: Civics 2006” showed that 24 percent of fourth-graders, 22 percent of eighth-graders and 27 percent of twelfth-graders could reach a simple mastery of civics called proficient.

“The ‘NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card’ showed that only 25 percent of American students could demonstrate a proficient knowledge of civics,” Quigley noted. “We were so alarmed at that poor result that the Center for Civic Education launched the Campaign to Promote Civic Education that year.

“Working with civic education professionals and policymakers in each state and the District of Columbia we have built state campaign coalitions dedicated to strengthening civic education policies and practice,” Quigley said. “The state campaigns to restore the civic mission of schools have made great progress.”

The more notable accomplishments of the Campaign to Promote Civic Education include the following:

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- Every state has established a campaign coalition to strengthen civic education
- Alaska, Arizona, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia have created officially sanctioned state commissions on civic education or civic literacy
- Thirty measures supporting effective civic learning have passed legislatures in 23 states
- Twenty-six states have held state level summit conferences on the importance of effective civic education

“Although great progress has been made by the state campaigns to restore the civic mission of schools, ‘The Nation’s Report Card: Civics 2006’ shows much work needs to be done to ensure that each student receives the education necessary to become an informed, engaged citizen of this nation,” Quigley said.

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### **About the Center for Civic Education**

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization dedicated to promoting an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles and actively engaged in the practice of democracy in the United States and other countries.

The Center specializes in civic and citizenship education, law-related education, and international educational exchange programs for developing democracies. Programs focus on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights; American political traditions and institutions at the federal, state, and local levels; constitutionalism; civic participation; and the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

The Center’s headquarters are in Calabasas, Calif., with an office in Washington, D.C. Since its start in 1965, the Center has produced highly acclaimed curricular materials that are being used in each state and the District of Columbia and in more than 60 foreign countries, including Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Lithuania, Mexico, Morocco, Poland, Romania, Russia, Senegal and South Africa.

For more information, contact Ted McConnell, Director, Campaign to Promote Civic Education, at 202-861-8800 or [mcconnell@civiced.org](mailto:mcconnell@civiced.org).

### **About “The Nation’s Report Card”**

“The Nation’s Report Card” is the only nationally representative, continuing evaluation of the condition of education in the United States and has served as a national yardstick of student achievement since 1969. Through the National Assessment of Educational Progress, “The Nation’s Report Card” informs the public about what America’s students know and can do in various subject areas and compares achievement data between states and various student demographic groups.

The National Assessment Governing Board is an independent, bipartisan board whose members include governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators, business representatives, and members of the general public. Congress created the 26-member governing board in 1988 to set policy for NAEP.

“The Nation’s Report Card: Civics 2006” may be obtained by visiting <http://nationsreportcard.gov/>.