JAMES MADISON LEGACY PROJECT EXPANSION RESEARCH

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CERL
Civic Education Research Lab

Center for Civic Education

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James Madison Legacy Project Expansion Program
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The research team for this study is based at the Civic Education Research Lab at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. Neither the author nor the staff have financial interests that could be affected by the findings of this study.

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Formed at the nexus of academia, practice, and public policy, the Civic Education Research Lab (CERL) at Georgetown University is committed to studying civic education and engagement in a democratic society. Founded by Dr. Diana Owen, a Georgetown political science professor, CERL works with collaborative partners to unite academic rigor with the insights of practitioners in the field. The CERL team conducts evidence-based research on the effectiveness of civic teaching and learning at the K-12 and post-secondary levels. Our studies explore the impact of teacher education on student learning and examine students' acquisition of civic knowledge, dispositions, and competencies through classroom curricula and civic programs. As the requirements of responsible and effective citizenship in the 21st century have become increasingly complex, CERL examines the role of civic education in preparing young people to navigate the digital age political world. CERL's research on civic engagement explores the connection between civic education and community involvement. We also track the evolution and consequences of media technology for participation in elections and community affairs. CERL hosts an online repository of resources and information for scholars, educators, and policy makers. To learn more visit our website: https://cerl.georgetown.edu/ and subscribe to our Substack: @civiceducationresearchlab.

Center for Civic Education

The Center for Civic Education has led K-12 civic education nationwide since its founding in 1965. Through its flagship programs We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution and Project Citizen: Community Engagement in Policy, the Center's innovative, evidence-based programs have reached more than 50 million students and 460,000 educators in over 80 countries. The Center provides professional development, high-quality curricular materials, inquiry-driven digital and print resources, toolkits, and support for civic educators on a broad scale. Its programs are aligned to social studies standards in every state, supported by a national network of state partners, and receive active endorsement from state bar associations, foundations, and educational, professional, business, and community organizations in every state and the District of Columbia. Other Center programs and resources include the Civil Discourse Toolkit, Media Literacy lesson and video series, Civics Inquiries, Constitution EXPLAINED video series, and the 60-Second Civics daily podcast. The Center and CERL have received nine major grants from the U.S. Department of Education. These include the James Madison Legacy Project (2015-2020), Strengthening Democracy through History and Civics (2018- 2021), Project Citizen Research Program (2019-2024), James Madison Legacy Project Expansion (2021-2025), We the People: Civics that Empowers All Students (2022-2025), Project Community: Media Literacy and Public Policy (2023-2025). Project Citizen: Integrated Civic Competencies (2024-2028), We the People: Documents of Democracy (2025 2028), and Literacy for We the People (2025-2029) with the Delaware Department of Education. To learn more: https://www.civiced.org/

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JAMES MADISON LEGACY PROJECT EXPANSION PROGRAM

The James Madison Legacy Project Expansion Program (JMLPE) was a three-year project that updated the Center for Civic Education's We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution curriculum to be more accessible to all students. Drawing on the research and successes of its predecessor, the James Madison Legacy Project (Owen, Hartzell, and Sanchez, 2020), the JMLPE aimed to transform the We the People curriculum to achieve even greater gains in students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Specifically, the JMLPE sought to improve student outcomes in classes with high percentages of students with disabilities (SWD) and English learners (EL). In addition to the curriculum adaptations, the Center developed an aligned professional learning program to support teachers' implementation of the We the People curriculum.

The objectives of the James Madison Legacy Project Expansion were:

1. to improve students' academic performance in civics and better prepare them for civic life and responsible citizenship through the We the People curriculum;
2. to improve civic outcomes for students with disabilities and English learners;
3. to design and implement a teacher professional learning program to support instruction of the We the People curriculum through a community of practice; and
4. to improve access to high-quality civics instruction by working with school leaders and increasing teachers' knowledge and instructional efficacy.

The three-year project implementation commenced in 2022 with an expert teacher study to inform the adaptations of the We the People curriculum and the teacher professional learning program. In 2022, the Center convened a five-day workshop of curriculum experts and mentor teachers to begin the process of adapting the curriculum and professional learning experience. JMLPE was fully implemented over two academic years. In Year 1 (2023-24), the JMLPE was instituted at sites in seven states—Arizona, Colorado, Kentucky, Maryland, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. The sites were expanded in Year 2 (2024-25) to five additional states—Idaho, Kansas, Nevada, New Mexico, and Washington—for a total of twelve sites. Teachers from 22 states received the professional learning program at the JMLPE sites. Schools/teachers and their students were recruited by coordinators in the Center's network of civic educators who directed the JMLPE in their state.

Teachers attended five-day summer institutes at sites across the country, which included presentations from historians and constitutional scholars, pedagogy demonstrations, and participation in a simulated hearing to prepare them to instruct We the People with their students. They received follow-up professional learning sessions throughout the academic year. Teachers received continuing support as they taught We the People to their students through a professional learning community of their peers, mentor teachers, state coordinators, and Center staff.

RESEARCH STUDIES

The Civic Education Research Lab (CERL) at Georgetown University conducted quantitative and qualitative research on the JMLPE. Research studies of teachers and students evaluated the efficacy of the JMLPE professional learning program and the adapted We the People (WTP) curriculum. The project focused on middle school (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12) students. In the first year of the JMLPE (2022-23), CERL fielded a pilot study of expert teachers and their students who were taught the updated We the People curriculum. CERL researched the impact of the fully implemented teacher professional learning program and the adapted We the People curriculum in the following two academic years. The research was anchored by cluster randomized controlled trials with school level of assignment. For the first study, teachers who taught a civics class with a high percentage of students with disabilities (SWDs) were recruited for the research. Teachers of classes with high percentages of English learners (ELs) were enlisted for the second study. The research included a comparison of students who had native-level English competency (NLE) and English learners. In most instances, SWDs and ELs took civics classes with the general student population. Thus, the research has broader implications for the civic education of all students. The impact evaluation compared teachers enrolled in the JMLPE and their students to a comparison group of teachers who instructed students in conventional civics classes. The student outcomes measured in the study were civic knowledge, understanding of core civics constructs, civic attentiveness, interest in government and public affairs, political efficacy, communication and civil discourse skills, teamwork and collaboration skills, media literacy skills, and civic engagement. The impact of the professional learning program on teachers' civic knowledge, confidence in their teaching abilities, pedagogy skills, media literacy instruction, and instructional efficacy was assessed. The Center for Civic Education, with its state partners and Civic Mentors, used the research to inform the development of the We the People curriculum and the teacher professional learning program throughout the duration of the project.

KEY STUDENT RESEARCH FINDINGS

Civic Knowledge

Knowledge of American history and government among middle and high school students who were taught the We the People curriculum improved significantly. The knowledge gain of We the People students was greater than that of the control group across the board. The increases in civic knowledge of English learners who were taught We the People were significantly larger than the control group students' knowledge gains. The civic knowledge of We the People middle school students in classes with high concentrations of SWDs increased by 72% compared to 32% for the control group. The knowledge gains for high school English learners who were taught We the People were greater than those of students with native-level English competency.

- ✓ The knowledge scores of We the People middle school students in the EL study improved by 62% versus 28% for the control group.
- ✓ The civic knowledge of We the People high school students in the SWD study rose by 32% compared to 16% for the control group.

- ✓ The increase in knowledge was 32% for high school We the People students in classes with high concentrations of English learners in contrast to 21% for the control group.
- ✓ The civic knowledge of middle school English learners who were taught We the People rose by 54% compared to 31% for the control group.
- ✓ Civic knowledge of We the People high school English learners increased by 48% versus 34% for native-level English speakers.

Understanding of Core Civics Constructs

A majority of students reported that they understood more about American government because of their civics class. The percentages were notably higher for We the People students than the control group.

- ✓ 80% of We the People middle school students in the SWD study indicated that they understood more about American government compared to 63% of the control group.
- ✓ 73% of We the People middle school students in the EL study had greater comprehension of American government in contrast to 55% of the control group.
- ✓ 74% of high school students in We the People classes with high numbers of SWDs understood more about American government compared to 67% of the control group.
- ✓ 73% of We the People high school students in the EL study reported that they understood more about American government versus 69% in the control condition.
- ✓ A significantly higher percentage of We the People students had a better sense of their rights and responsibilities as a citizen because of their class than students in the control group across all conditions.
- ✓ 61% English learners in middle school who were taught We the People understood more about American government after their class versus 51% of English learners in the control group.

Civic Interest and Attentiveness

Students who were taught the We the People curriculum became more interested in issues and attentive to politics and government affairs than students in the control group.

- ✓ 35% of middle school We the People students in the SWD study and 38% in the EL study reported that they became more interested in politics and government affairs compared to 25% in the SWD and 23% in the EL control groups.

Keeping Informed

We the People students were more likely to feel that it was very important to keep informed about what is going on in their community after their class.

- ✓ In classes with SWDs, 33% of middle school and 40% of high school We the People students believed keeping informed was very important compared to 27% of middle school and 30% of high school control group students.
- ✓ In classes with ELs, 32% of middle school and 40% of high school We the People students indicated that it was very important to keep informed compared to 24% of middle school and 35% of control group students.

Political Efficacy

After their We the People experience, students were more likely to feel that they have a say in what government does. The increase in We the People students' political efficacy was greater than for the control group.

- ✓ The percentage of We the People students in the SWD study who felt they could impact government increased from 20% to 32% for middle school and from 26% to 37% for high school.
- ✓ The percentage of We the People middle school students in the EL study indicating that they felt efficacious rose from 19% to 30%. Efficacy increased from 26% to 36% among We the People high school students.
- ✓ The political efficacy of WTP middle school ELs increased by 11-percentage points, from 14% to 25%. The control group EL students had no change on the efficacy indicator.
- ✓ The percentage of WTP EL high school students who believed they have a say in what government does increased by 16 percentage points, from 26% to 40%.

Communication and Civil Discourse Skills

We the People students' ability to express their opinions and engage in civil discussions with others improved significantly after participating in We the People. They became more comfortable speaking in front of a group, willing to share their views with others, and involved in class discussions. They also became more respectful of other people's points of view. We the People middle school English learners made greater gains in communication and civil discourse skills than native-level English speakers.

- ✓ The SWD study found that middle school We the People students' scores on a communication and civil discourse skills index improved by 11% compared to 6% for the control group.
- ✓ The communication and civil discourse index scores of high school We the People students in the SWD study rose by 17% versus 10% for their comparison group counterparts.
- ✓ Middle and high school We the People students in the EL study made greater gains in communication and civil discourse skills than the control group.
- ✓ We the People middle school English learners' scores on the communication and civil discourse index increased by 16% compared to 10% for native-level English speakers. WTP middle school students' gains were greater than those of the control group.
- ✓ Scores on the communication and civil discourse index of high school English learners who were taught We the People increased by 16% compared to 11% for all native-level English speakers and 9% for English learners in the control group.
- ✓

Community Engagement

Through the simulated congressional hearings, students developed skills necessary for civic participation. We the People students felt more prepared to engage in their community, volunteer to help others, and vote following their class.

- ✓ The percentage of middle and high school We the People students in the SWD and EL studies who were ready to engage in their community rose from roughly 30% to 40%. The increases for the We the People students were larger than for the control group.
- ✓ 60% or more of We the People students planned on voting in elections after their class. The percentage was somewhat larger for high school than middle school students given high schoolers' closer proximity to voting age. We the People students were significantly more inclined to vote than the control group. The findings were consistent across the SWD and EL studies.

Media Literacy

JMLPE teachers integrated literacy lessons that students need to navigate today's complex media landscape and conduct research for their simulated congressional hearings into the We the People curriculum.

- ✓ 75% of JMLPE educators reported teaching students to be critical consumers of news.
- ✓ 74% held discussions in which students considered multiple perspectives.
- ✓ Majorities had students access online news sites and use websites with historical information.
- ✓ Nearly half instructed students in using government websites and public resources.

KEY TEACHER RESEARCH FINDINGS

Civic Knowledge

The civic content knowledge of teachers who participated in the JMLPE professional learning program increased significantly. After completing the JMLPE program, the knowledge of the JMLPE teachers was significantly higher than the control group teachers' knowledge.

- ✓ Overall, JMLPE teachers' civic content knowledge increased by 10% compared to 4% for the control group.
- ✓ The civic knowledge of SWD teachers rose by 17% and EL teachers' knowledge improved by 14%.

Confidence Teaching Civics

Teachers enrolled in the JMLPE professional learning program became more confident teaching core civic competencies. Their confidence in teaching civic skills and dispositions increased.

- ✓ JMLPE teachers' score on an index measuring confidence in teaching civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions increased by 3%, while control group teachers' confidence decreased by 8%.

Teacher Pedagogy

Nearly all JMLPE teachers used project-based learning techniques. They engaged students in a range of learning activities, such as debates and speeches.

- ✓ 89% of JMLPE teachers incorporated simulated congressional hearings into their civics instruction.
- ✓ JMLPE teachers increased the amount of media literacy content included in their classes by 7%. Students' media literacy skills directly support the research components of the WTP curriculum.
- ✓ Half of JMLPE teachers integrated STEM skills into the WTP curriculum.

Emphasis on Core Civics Topics

JMLPE teachers were more likely to emphasize core civics topics, such as the principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution, in their classes than the control group.

- ✓ 74% of JMLPE teachers prioritized educating students about core democratic principles as set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution compared to 57% of the control group.
- ✓ 78% of JMLPE teachers prioritized teaching students about government and how it works compared to 65% of the control group.

Media Literacy Instruction

Teachers were more likely to incorporate media literacy into their lessons following the JMLPE professional learning program.

- ✓ 67% taught their students to be critical consumers of news
- ✓ 62% had their students access online news sites
- ✓ 61% had students use websites with information on historical documents, objects, and events

Evaluation of the JMLPE

Teachers rated the JMLPE "very effective":

- ✓ 77% — Increasing content knowledge
- ✓ 68% — Enhancing teaching and pedagogy skills
- ✓ 76% — Preparing teachers to instruct the WTP curriculum
- ✓ 64% — Preparing students for civic life
- ✓ 55% — Preparing teachers to address difficult topics and classroom discussions
- ✓ 76% — Preparing teachers for simulated congressional hearings

Teachers rated JMLPE resources as excellent or very good:

- ✓ 85% — We the People textbook
- ✓ 66% — Lesson plans
- ✓ 73% — Supporting materials

WE THE PEOPLE: THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution is the Center's flagship curricular program. Developed in 1987 through the Commission on the Bicentennial, it was adopted as the principal civic education program by the U.S. Department of Education. It is a robust and comprehensive curricular program grounded in the foundations and institutions of American government focusing on constitutional principles and history, American political philosophy, the Bill of Rights, Supreme Court cases, and legislation that shaped the American constitutional system. We the People aligns to state social studies standards in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The curriculum is available for elementary, middle, and high school levels. Since its inception, the We the People program has reached over 40,000,000 students and more than 440,000 teachers. The high school and middle school curriculum consists of six units articulated as focus questions. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1
We the People Instructional Units

Unit One	What Are the Philosophical and Historical Foundations of the American Political System?
Unit Two	How Did the Framers Create the Constitution?
Unit Three	How Has the Constitution Been Changed to Further the Ideals Contained in the Declaration of Independence?
Unit Four	How Have the Values and Principles Embodied in the Constitution Shaped American Institutions and Practices?
Unit Five	What Rights Does the Bill of Rights Protect?
Unit Six	What Challenges Might Face American Constitutional Democracy in the Twenty-First Century?

When instructing We the People, teachers incorporate high-leverage strategies, including close-reading of complex text, primary source analysis, role-plays, civil dialogue models, and analytical and reflective writing. The We the People program includes a culminating summative assessment in the form of simulated congressional hearings. Students in a class are formed into six teams aligned to the WTP units, and become experts on their topic, preparing testimony on different questions. They work collaboratively in their unit teams to apply their knowledge from their study of the Constitution and its history and principles to the questions they are addressing. They testify as a team before a simulated congressional panel consisting of community leaders, government officials, lawyers, academics, members of Congress and their staff, school and district leaders, and civic educators. The Center hosts an annual National Finals where classes from each state come to the DC area to compete against one another after participating in their school, district, and state level hearings. While the teachers and students in the JMLPE did not compete in simulated hearings at the national level, they did participate in their school-level and, in some instances, state-level hearings. They can work toward qualifying for National Finals in the future.

Transforming the We the People Curriculum

Meeting the demands of the study to adapt the WTP curricular program to better serve students with disabilities, English language learners, and students of color, the Center as the implementation organization had many options at their disposal. The Center engaged many of their stakeholder groups including civics mentors, veteran and novice teachers with experience and expertise with these student populations, as well as their state partners. They analyzed the landscape of different educational approaches from the education and civic education field including Universal Design for Learning (UDL), SEL competencies from the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). In addition to the data collected from the pilot study, the Center curriculum team landed on a set of approaches and strategies that would support civic learning for students in these subgroups specifically and all students generally.

The Center curriculum team drafted a template that incorporated high-leverage strategies for integrating SEL competencies into civics instruction, UDL strategies to improve accessibility to all learners, and culturally responsive teaching moves to support teachers in making decisions to meet the cultural and language needs of their student populations. This template was a lesson plan that aligned to topics in the WTP curriculum and text and integrated the new strategies and teacher moves. It also wrapped around to provide teacher guidance. It included student-facing graphic organizers and resources to support civic learning. The Center team created an exemplar lesson using the template and re-engaged with stakeholders for feedback and iteration. The template was rolled out to the curriculum writers during the five-day curriculum workshop where further iterations were made after the teacher experts had begun developing their JMLPE lessons for different parts of the WTP curriculum.

Anchoring the entire curricular approach was inquiry as the primary mode of instruction. While the Center's curriculum has been based in inquiry with the units, lessons, sections, and culminating hearings led as questions, the pedagogy of inquiry was not formally articulated. Inquiry-based learning is a "student-centered teaching method that encourages students to ask questions and investigate real-world problems" (Scholl, 2023: online). Inquiry is right in line with the goals for WTP, where students are engaged with civic knowledge to address real-world events and issues through their simulated congressional hearing, Additionally, inquiry is a powerful vehicle since the WTP program is a textbook-based curriculum. It is even more vital that students find a way to experience agency and their own voice within their learning. In this way, students can ask and explore answers to questions within primary and secondary sources in dialogue with their classmates and bring in and experience varied perspectives within the context of their civic learning. The inquiry approach used in the curricular adaptation is framed by the College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for State Social Studies standards which articulates four dimensions of inquiry using compelling and supporting questions. Additionally, the 5E inquiry approach (Bybee, et. al., 2006) leveraged by the STEM education field was applied to the lessons themselves. Teachers are able to move students through different phases of inquiry within the class period as they explored the compelling questions aligned to the civics content in the program.

The WTP curriculum was transformed through the integration of intentional and direct teacher pedagogical shifts with related student resources to support English learners as well as the other subgroups. The grounding in inquiry-based instruction as the guiding structure of the lessons as well as the integrated and wrap-around pedagogical supports for SEL, UDL, and culturally responsive teaching supported ELs in many ways. Additionally, the student resources, such as the bilingual dictionary, close-reading text organizers, and translated versions of key documents and texts, were direct student-facing materials that teachers said helped their ELs access the complex text and concepts of the WTP curriculum. These resources lifted the burden off of teachers to source, refine, and develop their own materials. In all, teachers in the study made use of 30 lessons supporting both middle and high school versions of the WTP program.

To support the implementation of the transformed WTP curriculum, teachers participated in a five-day summer institute in single-state or combined sites as well as PL throughout the school year. Teachers received a total of 52 hours of PL which included content through scholars and experts in the WTP curriculum, such as political scientists, historians, and constitutional scholars; pedagogy demonstrations to experience the transformed curriculum and collaborate on how to bring the curriculum into their own classrooms; and preparation for and participation in a simulated congressional hearing as adult learners. There was added emphasis on the pedagogical shifts in the JMLPE lessons. The summer institutes and school-year PL sessions included development in culturally responsive pedagogies, best practices for ELs, and SEL and instructional strategies. Teachers received mentorship from expert teachers of WTP and support from their state coordinator to organize and hold their class or school-wide simulated congressional hearings.

JMLPE RESEARCH

Research on We the People has consistently demonstrated the program's positive impact on teachers and students. The James Madison Legacy Project, which was implemented from 2015 to 2019, substantially enhanced teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills while increasing their efficacy in the classroom. The We the People curriculum improved high-need middle and high school students' achievement in attaining state standards in civics and government. We the People students made greater gains in knowledge of American history and government, attention to public affairs, and the ability to take part in their community than students who were taught a standard civics curriculum focused on textbook and discussion-based instruction (Owen, Hartzell, and Sanchez, 2020). We the People has been shown to improve students' reading and writing literacy and STEM skills. The JMLPE was informed by and extended this research.

The Civic Education Research Lab (CERL) at Georgetown University conducted quantitative and qualitative research on the JMLPE. The Center, with its state partners and Civic Mentors, used the research to inform the development of the curriculum and the teacher professional learning program throughout the duration of the project. In the first year of the JMLPE, CERL fielded a pilot study of expert teachers and their students who were taught the updated We the People curriculum. CERL researched the impact of the fully implemented

teacher professional learning program and the adapted We the People curriculum in the following two academic years. Separate studies were conducted for students in classes with high percentages of students with disabilities and English learners. The impact of the professional learning program on teachers' content knowledge and pedagogy was assessed. Over the course of two years, a total of 379 teachers and 12,501 students participated in the JMLPE research.

The research was anchored by cluster randomized controlled trials (RCTs) with school level of assignment. The impact evaluation compared teachers enrolled in the JMLPE and their students to a comparison group of teachers who instructed students in conventional civics classes. The comparison group consisted of teachers who did not receive the JMLPE professional learning program and instructed conventional civics classes with a high percentage of ELs. Students in the "business as usual" condition received a standard civics or social studies curriculum that emphasized classroom instruction focused on knowledge building and discussion-based activities as opposed to more participatory elements of learning or classroom community engagement (Levesque, 2018). Pre- and post-program tests were administered online to students in the JMLPE/We the People intervention and control groups. The student pretests were proctored by teachers in class at the beginning of the WTP or standard civics class. Posttests were given when the curriculum was completed. CERL provided teachers with detailed instructions for administering the tests. Support for the testing was provided by CERL and the state coordinators. Teacher pretesting of JMLPE teachers was proctored by state coordinators and mentor teachers during the five-day summer institutes. The posttest was administered after all program requirements were completed, including participation in follow-up professional development sessions and implementing the We the People curriculum with their students. The testing was administered online to the control group teachers by state coordinators.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical analyses were conducted on the pretest/posttest data to determine if there were statistically significant changes in student outcomes due to the WTP intervention compared to the control group which received a conventional civics curriculum. Difference of means tests (paired samples t-tests) were conducted to identify within group shifts in the pretest and posttest measures. In the studies, the tests were performed separately for middle and high school students. Difference of means tests controlling for students who were native English speakers and ELs were conducted using the Year 2 data where this information was available. Separate analyses were conducted for teachers of SWDs and ELs. The pretest and posttest mean scores and standard deviations, the difference of pretest/posttest means and significance test, the percentage change in pretest/posttest means, the effect size based on Hedge's g, the improvement index, and the pretest/posttest correlation and significance test were reported. The percentage change is a useful statistic as it is easily interpreted and accessible to a wide audience. However, as a ratio it can be misleading, especially if the initial value is near zero (Curran-Everett and Williams, 2015), which was rarely the case in this study. The percentage difference supplements other measures of change that are reported, including effect size and WWC's improvement index.

The U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) improvement index was calculated from Hedge's g. As per the WWCs definition: "The improvement index is the average expected change in the percentile rank for an average comparison group student that then receives the intervention (or also the difference in percentile ranks for an average intervention versus comparison group student)."[1] For the within group comparisons, the improvement index indicates the expected change in percentile rank of an average student who receives the WTP curriculum intervention or a standard civics curriculum. For the WTP treatment/control group comparison, the improvement index represents the average expected change in the percentile rank if an average control group member receives the WTP intervention. In other words, it is the difference in percentile ranks for an average student in the WTP group after the intervention compared to the comparison group. The percentage difference between pretest and posttest means was reported for the paired samples t-tests for the WTP intervention and control groups.

The interpretation of effect size in education research has become a matter of debate. A common approach adopts Cohen's (1988) benchmarks of .20 indicating a small effect, .50 a medium effect, and .80 a large effect. However, these guidelines were based on a small number of controlled lab experiments in social psychology conducted in the 1960s that primarily used undergraduate subjects. Kraft argues that "effects that are small by Cohen's standards are large relative to the impacts of most field-based interventions" (2020: 241). Meta-analyses of more recent well-designed field experiments in education research have found that effect sizes with potentially important consequences are interpreted as having no or small effects using Cohen's guidelines. Kraft suggests that the magnitude of the effect depends on what and how outcomes are measured. Fixed benchmarks, while easy to use, cannot account for differences in study features and outcomes (Kraft, 2020). Comparable studies to the present research use pretest/posttest survey methods to examine student civic learning. Findings for students' civic knowledge outcomes that are not overly aligned with the intervention typically have larger effects than studies of students' civic dispositions, skills, and competencies. Thus, it is prudent not to dismiss statistically significant differences with small effect sizes related to these outcomes. Effect sizes of .20 or greater are considered to be noteworthy in this research.

Hierarchical linear models were estimated using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to determine if there were statistically significant differences in the adjusted posttest scores of the intervention and control group students. ANCOVA was an appropriate model for this analysis as it adjusts for non-equivalence in intervention and control group scores at baseline. Separate ANCOVA models were estimated for middle and high school students. Posttest outcome measures were the dependent variables. Pretest outcome measures and a variable coded for the students' teacher were entered as covariates. Intervention/control group was a fixed factor.

[1] Institute for Education Sciences. 2022. What Works Clearinghouse, Procedures and Standards Handbook, version 5, U.S. Department of Education, pp. 186-187.

STUDENT STUDIES
Measures

Civic Knowledge

Americans' basic knowledge of government and politics has been persistently low for decades (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996), a trend which has been corroborated by recent studies (Kleinberg and Lau, 2019; CivxNow, 2023). Many students with disabilities lack an understanding of important historical details which emphasizes the need to enhance knowledge in this domain (Garwood, et al., 2020). Civic knowledge encompasses a vast amount of information pertinent to the foundations and institutions of government, political processes, public policies, and laws. Knowledgeable citizens are cognizant of government institutions and processes and how they work. They understand their role in a democratic polity and know their rights and responsibilities in society (Branson and Quigley, 1998; Van Camp and Baugh, 2016). Knowledge has been shown to be a building block, if not a necessary precondition, for civic engagement (Galston, 2004; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996). People who possess knowledge of how the political system works as well as the requisite laws, rules, norms, and practices are equipped with the capacity to effectively participate in civic life (Niemi and Junn, 1998; Neimi, 2001; Galston, 2004; Campbell, 2006; Kleinberg and Lau, 2019). People with higher levels of knowledge—whether actual or perceived—are more politically efficacious and can advocate for themselves and others (Finkel and Ernst, 2005; Galston, 2004; Brody, 1994; Youniss, 2011).

Civic Content Knowledge

Civic knowledge in this research reflects standard content for civics and social studies classes. To measure students' acquisition of civics content, a knowledge index was constructed of twenty-seven multiple choice items related to the foundations and principles of U.S. government, the U.S. Constitution, government institutions, the organization and function of the federal system, extra-constitutional institutions, such as political parties and the media, political processes, like voting, the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizens, and the relationship of the U.S. to other nations. These content areas are addressed by the WTP curriculum and standard civics curricula as taught to the control group students. The items were not overly aligned with the WTP curriculum intervention and were based on established measures with known reliability. They were derived from sources, including the National Standards for Civics and Government, the NAEP, and items developed for and used in the JMLP (Owen, Hartzell, and Sanchez, 2020). Each item in the index had four response categories and a "don't know" option. One point was given for each correct item; no points were given for wrong answers or "don't know" responses. The civic knowledge items were combined into identical pretest and posttest additive indexes. Scores on the indexes ranged from 1 to 27 points. The internal consistency reliability of the civic knowledge indexes for SWDs and ELs based on Cronbach's α was acceptable for the pretest and posttest.[2] (See Table 1.)

[2]What Works Clearinghouse requires a Cronbach's α of .50 or greater to be acceptable. See Institute of Education Science, U.S. Department of Education, What Works Clearinghouse Module 5, Outcome Measures. Module 5 Outcome Measures (ed.gov)

Table 1
Civic Knowledge Index Range and Reliability (Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
Students with Disabilities	1-27	.83	.88
English Learners	1-27	.84	.88

Understanding of Core Civics Constructs

Before the start of their civics classes, students were asked two questions assessing how strongly they felt about the learning the topics they would be covering: 1) It is important to know how American government works and 2) It is important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States. They were asked if they understood more about these topics following their class: 1) I understand more about American government because of this class and 2) I understand more about the historical events that shape the United States because I took this class. They also were asked: 3) I have a better sense of my rights and responsibilities as a citizen because of this class. The response categories for all of the items were disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree.

Civic Dispositions

Civic dispositions are traits, attitudes, and ingrained "habits of the heart" that are consistent with the common good and are central to the functioning of a healthy democracy (Tocqueville,1838; Crittenden and Levine, 2018). Quality civic education can contribute to students' development of the capacities that support democratic citizenship. It provides young people with deep educational experiences that enable them to understand their rights and responsibilities and develop skills necessary to engage effectively in political and civic life. It can open opportunities for students to apply what they learn so that they can develop skills integral to responsible and effective citizenship (Branson, 1998; Branson and Quigley, 1998). Civics instruction in middle and high school can impart lasting democratic proclivities and prime citizenship orientations that develop over a lifetime. (Pasek et al., 2008, Kahne and Sporte, 2008/9). Quality programs can lead students to develop greater civic commitments and capacities (Kahne and Middaugh, 2008). Research has demonstrated increases in the development of civic dispositions among students who have been taught the WTP curriculum (Owen, 2015; Owen, Hartzell, and Sanchez, 2020; Owen and Irion-Groth, 2020).

Civic Attentiveness

Civic attentiveness is a measure of students' awareness of and concern about issues and the extent to which they monitor political affairs. A civic attentiveness index was created from two survey items: 1) I care about political issues facing the country (disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree), 2) I follow government and politics in the media most days (disagree, neither agree nor disagree, and agree), 3) How interested are you in American government and politics? (not very, somewhat, very), and 4) How much attention do you pay to issues that are affecting your community? (not much, some, a lot). The items were combined to form pre/post additive

indexes that ranged from 1 to 9. The index reliability (Cronbach's α) for the pretest and the posttest was acceptable based on WWC's standards. (See Table 2.)

Table 2
Civic Attentiveness Index Range and Reliability (Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
Students with Disabilities	1-9	.64	.64
English Learners	1-9	.66	.69

Interest in Government and Public Affairs and Keeping Informed

The impact of students' WTP or standard civics class on their political interest was measured post-program. Following their civics class, students were asked: Since taking this class, are you more or less interested in government and public affairs? (more interested, about the same, less interested). They also responded to the question: How important is it for you to keep informed about what is going on in your community? (very, somewhat, not very important).

Political Efficacy

Internal political efficacy is a person's belief that their actions can influence government and that they can make a difference in their community. Civic education that employs active learning pedagogies, including primary source analysis, simulations, and role playing can increase students' sense of efficacy (Halverson, Tucker, and Smith, 2024). Students' development of a sense of efficacy through curricula that involves community engagement and problem-solving can increase civic attentiveness and provide a pathway to future political participation and voting (Pasek, et al., 2008; Willeck and Mendelberg, 2022). WTP, which employs these learning strategies, has been shown to positively impact high-need students' political self-efficacy (Owen, Hartzell, and Sanchez, 2020). Students' political efficacy was measured by their agreement with the statement: I have a say about what government does (disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree). Political efficacy was measured on both the pretest and posttest.

Civic Skills

An effective and engaged citizenry must develop the cognitive and participatory skills necessary for carrying out their duties as citizens (Branson and Quigley, 1998). Civic skills are the proficiencies that enable people to participate actively and responsibly as democratic citizens. The development of civic skills is essential for critical thinking that facilitates collective action (Civic Mission of Schools, 2011). Cognitive civic skills encompass how efficacious students feel in understanding or engaging in civic and political life. They enable people to call upon their civic knowledge and dispositions to take part in politics (Patrick, 2002; Kirlin, 2003). Participatory civic skills constitute the range of proficiencies required for democratic engagement. They encompass behaviors beneficial to the development of personal agency that promotes civic engagement (Patrick, 2002; Winthrop, 2020). Participatory skills are associated with following public events and issues as well as taking action to improve community

conditions. These skills include listening to and processing diverse views on issues, speaking openly, expressing opinions, working collaboratively to solve problems, and advocating on behalf of a cause. Other perspectives incorporate the notions of cognitive and participatory skills while highlighting the need for critical reasoning skills that facilitate democratic decision-making. These views emphasize the need for citizens to develop negotiating and coalition building skills that can enable reaching consensus to affect positive change. Civic skills are bolstered when students develop research, inquiry, communication, and leadership capabilities (Brammer, et al., 2011; Ata, 2019), all of which are embedded in the WTP curriculum.

Communication and Civil Discourse Skills

A central aim of the JMLPE/WTP curriculum intervention is to have students develop fundamental communication and civil discourse skills. WTP's culminating activity, the simulated hearings, require students to present prepared statements to a panel of judges and answer their questions, often with an audience of community members, parents, and peers. Students responded to six survey items related to communication and civil discourse: 1) I am comfortable speaking in front of a group, 2) I am willing to share my views with others, 3) I put a lot of effort into getting involved in class discussions, 4) I care about other people's points of view, 5) When others disagree with me, I respect their views, and 6) I am good at solving problems. The items were combined to form additive pretest and posttest indexes that ranged from 1 to 13. The pretest and posttest index reliabilities were acceptable. (See Table 3.)

Table 3
Communication and Civil Discourse Index Range and Reliability (Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
Students with Disabilities	1-13	.71	.74
English Learners	1-13	.71	.75

Teamwork and Collaboration Skills

Students' teamwork and collaboration skills were measured by their responses to three survey items: 1) I like to share my ideas, 2) I get along well with people who are different from me, and 3) It's important to arrive at an agreement or consensus when working with others. Respondents indicated that they rarely or never, sometimes, or always felt this way. The items were combined to form an additive index that ranged from 1 to 7. The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's α) was acceptable at .67 for the pretest and .75 for the posttest. (See Table 4.)

Table 4
Teamwork and Collaboration Skills Index Range and Reliability (Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
Students with Disabilities	1-7	.67	.75
English Learners	1-7	.66	.69

Media Literacy Skills

Media literacy skills equip students to be responsible and informed citizens as they contend with the rapidly evolving information environment. Students spend an average of 8.5 hours daily glued to screens yet often lack the capacity to evaluate the quality of the information and messages they are receiving (Rideout, et al., 2021). Young people often have difficulty dealing with the proliferation of misinformation they encounter daily through traditional and social media. Nearly 70% of high school students are not confident in their ability to evaluate the credibility of information online (St. Aubin and Liedke, 2023). They lack the ability to identify the origins of a story, evaluate its veracity, and to crosscheck sources (Adjin-Tettey, 2022; Ireton and Posetti, 2018; McGrew, et al., 2017; Haidt, 2024; Mihailidis, 2018; Trust, et al., 2022). The need for students to recognize misleading or incorrect information is growing as increasing numbers of students rely on chatbots, like OpenAI's ChatGPT or Microsoft's Copilot. A 2026 study by the Pew Research Center found that more than half of students ages 13 to 17 are using chatbots for researching and writing school assignments (Singer, 2026). Teachers consider misinformation to be a major issue in society and the classroom (Owen et al. 2022). They believe it is their responsibility to address misinformation, and help students develop media literacy competencies, such as distinguishing fact from opinion and evaluating the trustworthiness of a source (Share, Mamikonyan, and Lopez 2019; Owen, et al., 2022; Allen, Griffin, and Mindrila, 2022). However, they often lack training and resources to convey media literacy skills to students. Media literacy education is embedded in the We the People curriculum, as teachers help students to identify quality sources of information as they conduct research in preparation for the simulated hearings.

Media Literacy Measures

In Year 2, students were asked on the posttest if they learned four media literacy skills in their class: 1) how to tell if a news source is reliable, 2) how to detect misinformation, 3) how to use social media to send information responsibly, and 4) how to determine if a website is a good source of information. The response categories were yes/no.

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is voluntary involvement in community affairs that is put forth in the public interest. It constitutes active participation that is collaborative and works toward addressing areas of local, national, and global concern.[3] It encompasses a wide range of activities—overtly political and non-political—that promote the public good and are intended to improve the quality of life in communities and society (Carney, et al., 2023). Traditional forms of civic engagement include voting and participation in the electoral process, engaging in discussion and debate, participating in community affairs, volunteering, advocacy, and protesting. People who are civically engaged feel it is their responsibility to address the problems of the larger society and promote a positive quality of life in their communities (Ehrlich, 2000). An engaged citizen has the ability, agency, and opportunity to act through a variety of channels (Delli Carpini, 2000; Bowen, Gordon, and Chojnacki, 2017).

[3] Definition developed by the Media and Civic Engagement class, Georgetown University, spring semester 2024.

Civic education can foster engagement through the development of the requisite knowledge, skills, dispositions, norms, and behaviors. Through the pedagogies of citizenship, teachers can enable their classrooms to serve as important sites for discussion about what democracy means and models for what democratic participation entails (Cohen, Pope, and Wong, 2021). The WTP curriculum provides a foundation for engagement as students gain an understanding of how government and political processes work. They get practical experience in democratic action through their preparation for and participation in simulated congressional hearings.

Civic Engagement Measures

Three indicators of civic engagement were used in this study. Students were asked on the pretest and posttest if they agreed with the propositions: I feel prepared to participate in my community and I volunteer to help others (agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree). After their civics class, students were asked if they planned on voting in elections if they are eligible. The two items measuring if students felt prepared to participate in their community and if they volunteered to help others were combined in an additive civic engagement index. The index ranged from 1 to 5, and the reliability was acceptable. (See Table 5.)

Table 5
Civic Engagement Index Range and Reliability (Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
Students with Disabilities	1-5	.55	.58
English Learners	1-5	.52	.56

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES STUDY

Defining Students with Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) governs special education and guarantees "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to all children, including children with disabilities. "Each State must ensure that FAPE is available to any individual child with a disability who needs special education and related services . . ." (IDEA, 1975, 34 CFR §300.101). The IDEA mandates that SWDs be educated to the "maximum extent appropriate" with their nondisabled peers in the "least restrictive environment" (Riser-Kositsky, 2024).

The IDEA pertains to students with a range of intellectual and developmental disabilities. Data from the 2021-22 academic year indicate that students with a specific learning disability constitute one-third of SWDs. Civic educators report that this category of SWD poses particular challenges (Garwood, et al., 2020). It is defined under IDEA as:

> a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia (IDEA, 1975, §300.8(c)(10)).

Approximately one-fifth of SWDs have a speech or language impairment. Fifteen percent have a health impairment, such as "limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems such as a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, or diabetes" (Irwin, et al., 2023: 15). Other disability types include autism, developmental delay, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, visual impairment, and traumatic brain injury (Irwin, et al., 2023).

The number of SWDs in K-12 schools has increased notably over the past four decades. In the 2021-22 academic year, 7.3 million SWDs were enrolled in public schools compared to 6.4 million in the 2010-11 academic year. Over 10 years, the percentage of SWDs in the population rose from 13% to 15% (NCES, 2022; Irwin, 2023). At the same time, the number of special education teachers has been declining. Special education teachers are defined by the U.S. government as teachers who "work with students who have a wide range of learning, mental, emotional, and physical disabilities" (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). The shortage of special education teachers is greater than for any field except foreign languages (Schaeffer, 2023). A January 2023 School Pulse Panel (SPP) found that 43% of public schools had vacancies in special education (IES, 2023b), and 77% were understaffed in this area (Delarosa, Robelen, and Sharp, 2023; IES, 2023a). The shortage of special education teachers is far greater than the 15% of vacancies in English Learner education and 7% in social studies as a discipline (IES, 2023b). Public schools reported that special education positions were the hardest to fill (Delarosa, Robelen, and Sharp, 2023). Teachers are leaving the special education field in large numbers due to burnout, the high demands of the job, insufficient support, low pay, poor working conditions, and resource limitations (Matthews, et al., 2021). The substantial shortage of special education teachers adversely affects schools' ability to provide equal opportunities for SWDs. This trend has been especially apparent in high-poverty schools in urban and rural areas which have difficulty attracting and retaining special education teachers with appropriate training and experience (Mason-Williams, et al., 2020). School districts have lowered the certification requirements and have allowed teachers to work with provisional licenses to meet the demand.

Professional development opportunities in civic education for teachers of SWDs are limited (Mullins, et al., 2020). This is especially the case for inclusive education where SWDs are treated as being just as competent as students without disabilities. Ideally, educators should accept SWDs differences, ensure that they feel supported, and encourage them to participate fully in the classroom. Teachers who participate in PL programs have more positive attitudes toward inclusive education (Holmqvist and Lelinge, 2020).

The wide differences in the types and severity of disabilities creates challenges for providing accommodations. Sixty-six percent of SWDs spend 80% or more of their school day in general education classes, including social studies. However, only a small percentage of students

with autism, intellectual disabilities, speech and language impairment, and emotional or behavioral disorders spend any time in general education classrooms. They often miss out on civics instruction entirely. Even when SWDs are placed in general education settings, they may not receive inclusive instruction or curricular support that is adapted to their needs (Minarik and Lintner, 2024). A goal of the JMLPE is to provide teachers with this support through PL that focuses on pedagogies and lesson plans adapted for instructing SWDs that also can be used effectively in general education classrooms. Thus, the JMLPE promotes enhanced civic education for all students.

Civic Education for Students with Disabilities

Despite calls for inclusion and equal access to education, SWDs too often are denied entree to the civics instruction available to other students. They frequently are deprived of the opportunity to gain even basic civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Bueso, 2022). The notion of educating SWDs for active citizenship runs counter to the traditional special education paradigm where students with learning differences are stigmatized by a presumption of incompetence. Minarik and Lintner argue that SWDs are defined by federal legislation, including IDEA, using a medical model that treats disability as an impairment where "students are viewed by their perceived deficits rather than their strengths" (2024: 5). This definition creates the perception that SWDs are limited in their capacity to take part in society, including political life, which can justify restricting their civics instruction. Dominant models of civic education exclude SWDs by mandating that students conform to nebulous standards of intellectual ability, communication skills, social independence, and behavior that are perceived requirements of good citizenship (Mann, et al., 2015). The unique paths to active democratic citizenship that people with disabilities take are rarely considered or honored (Urban, 2018). Advocates argue for the adoption of a social model of citizenship that challenges stigmatizing assumptions and works for a more inclusive education environment that emphasizes SWDs strengths and addresses challenges (Minarik and Lintner 2024).

Policies regarding civic education for SWDs vary widely. While some states, districts, and schools have made a concerted effort to focus more heavily on civic education, this progress does not always extend to SWDs. A 2020 report by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) found that schools systematically, even intentionally, exclude SWDs from social studies classes to claim the time for other services (Tichnor-Wagner, Kawashima-Ginsberg, and Hayat, 2020; Cairn, 2021). At the same time, efforts are being made to provide more inclusive history and civics instruction to all students, including SWDs. The Educating for American Democracy Roadmap (EAD), an inquiry-base, integrated content framework that provides advice and support for teaching civics and American history for all students, has been extended for SWDs by Emerging America and the Learning Disabilities Association of America.[4]

Teachers in middle and high school face challenges in providing quality civic education for SWDs who come to them with little background in history and social studies content. The

[4] https://tpsconsortiumcreatedmaterials.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Roadmap-8.0-Educating-for-American-Democracy-Disability-History-and-Civics-Extension.pdf

consequences of the limited exposure to civics students receive in elementary school are magnified for SWDs, who must develop new learning strategies. Many teachers are unable to engage in pedagogical practices required for civics instruction when SWDs are placed in general education settings, which is increasingly the case. With limited time to impart a large amount of civics content, teachers are constrained in their ability to modify instruction for SWDs. To successfully gain knowledge and develop citizenship skills, students must synthesize information from different sources, including primary source documents, which requires strong reading comprehension skills. They must summarize often complex ideas, consider multiple viewpoints, examine evidence, make connections, and draw conclusions (Curtis and Green, 2021).

Quality civic learning opportunities can prepare SWDs to become capable, contributing citizens in democracy who are able to advocate for themselves and others. Positive civic outcomes have been achieved across interventions when sufficient scaffolding of civics lessons is provided for SWDs that specifies a logical progression for knowledge and skill building (Ciullo, et al., 2020; Curtis and Green, 2021). Active learning approaches that are both teacher and student directed can work toward achieving constructive civic goals (Minarik and Lintner, 2024). Providing good civic education to SWDs requires that schools invest sufficient resources, including class time, and that teachers be prepared to instruct struggling learners in the civics domain (Curtis and Green, 2021). These practices are conducive to quality civics instruction generally for all students.

Civic education for SWDs in many schools is not prioritized or adapted to achieve desired civic outcomes. A large-scale empirical study of more than 48,000 high school students in Chicago Public Schools found statistically significant differences between the civic education experience of SWDs and those without disabilities after controlling for socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and gender. SWDs were less likely to receive formal instruction in civics and social studies and were often excluded from discussion-based classroom experiences. While they were included more often in service-based activities, they were given supportive roles (Bueso, 2022), such as handing out snacks to other participants. Schools struggle especially to provide meaningful civics instruction to students with emotional and behavioral disorders and those with learning disabilities. These categories of SWDs have far lower rates of community participation in voluntary service activities than other students (Garwood, et al., 2020). People with disabilities are less likely to participate in elections than the general voting population when given the opportunity. The turnout rate in the 2020 election was 7% lower for people with disabilities than for other voters. Over 2 million people with disabilities experienced difficulties casting a ballot (Miller, 2024). While barriers to access are a significant concern, limited civic education is a contributing factor.

SWDs' diminished civic education experiences correspond to low civics assessment results (Taylor, 2020). The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) civics exam has registered persistent knowledge deficits in citizenship knowledge and skills among all students. The discouraging findings are exacerbated for SWDs. Only 6% of SWD eighth graders performed at proficient levels in civics compared to 23% of students without disabilities on the 2022 NAEP civics exam. SWDs had an average score of 123 compared to 155 for students without disabilities for a gap of 32 points (NAEP, 2024). SWDs' civic score did not change from 2018 while the score for students without disabilities decreased. Still, the sizable NAEP civics

gap between SWDs and other students has been evident for over two decades and there has been little movement, especially in recent years.

Impact Evaluation: Students with Disabilities

The impact evaluation compares the students of teachers who received the JMLPE PL program and implemented the adapted WTP curriculum in their classes with a high percentage (50% or more) of SWDs. The comparison group consists of teachers who did not receive the JMLPE PD program and instructed conventional civics classes with a high percentage of SWDs. Students in the "business as usual" condition received a standard civics or social studies curriculum that emphasized classroom instruction focused on knowledge building and discussion-based activities as opposed to participatory elements of learning or community engagement (Levesque, 2018).

Teachers from a total of 133 schools who met the criteria of being certified in teaching SWDs and having a civics, social studies, American government, or history class with 50% or more SWDs participated in the research. Seventy-one schools in Year 1 and 62 schools in Year 2 completed the research requirements. Schools were randomly assigned to the JMLPE intervention or "business as usual" control condition. In Year 1, 48 schools in the JMLPE condition and 23 in the control condition completed the research. Forty-six schools participated in the intervention and 16 were in the control group in Year 2. All teachers in a school who met the inclusion criteria were invited to enroll in the study. A total of 148 teachers completed the study requirements. In Year 1, 55 teachers were in the intervention group and 24 were in the control group. Fifty teachers who received the intervention and 18 in the control group completed the study. All students of teachers in the intervention and control groups were recruited to the study regardless of whether they were SWDs or not. In most instances, SWDs took a WTP class with the general student population. The study examines the effectiveness of the intervention at the school/class/teacher level. Individual students' designation as SWDs was not ascertained. A total of 4,752 students were enrolled in the research and completed all of the testing over the two years of the study, 2,703 students in Year 1 and 2,049 in Year 2. (See Table 6 for the breakdown by grade level and year.)

Table 6
Sample Size
Students With Disabilities Study

	Year 1	Year 2	Total
JMLPE	1,887	1,299	3,186
Middle School	918	653	1,388
High School	969	646	1,315
Control	816	750	1,566
Middle School	470	475	1,128
High School	346	275	921
Total	2,703	2,049	4,752

Student Characteristics

The gender, race/ethnicity, and age of middle and high school students in the intervention and control groups were similar. (See Table 7.) The gender composition of the JMLPE and control groups was balanced between female and male students across the board. The racial and ethnic composition of the middle school JMLPE and control groups were closely matched. The control group had a slightly higher percentage of Latine students than the JMLPE cohort. The JMLPE high school group had a greater percentage of Black students, and the control group had more Latine students. Middle school students ranged in age from 11 to 14 years old. The majority of students in the JMLPE and control groups were 13 years old. The high school students were aged 14 to 18. The largest number of high school students in both the JMLPE and control groups were 15-year olds.

Table 7
Demographic Characteristics
Students with Disabilities Study

Demographic Characteristics				
	Middle School		**High School**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Gender				
Female	50%	49%	48%	48%
Male	48%	50%	49%	49%
Another Gender	2%	1%	2%	3%
Race				
Asian/AAPI	3%	2%	6%	2%
Black	16%	7%	23%	14%
Latine	23%	28%	26%	34%
Native American	2%	7%	3%	4%
White	46%	44%	33%	37%
Multiple Races	10%	12%	9%	9%
Age				
11	19%	12%	--	--
12	16%	9%	--	--
13	58%	60%	--	--
14	7%	19%	7%	5%
15	--	--	37%	41%
16	--	--	21%	21%
17	--	--	29%	28%
18	--	--	6%	5%

Civic Knowledge

The civic content knowledge of middle and high school JMLPE students who received the WTP curriculum intervention improved significantly from pretest to posttest. (See Table 8.)

The WTP students' gains were significantly higher than those in the control group. (See Table 8.) The increase in civic knowledge was greater for middle school students than their high school counterparts, a trend that is consistent with prior studies showing larger increases in civic knowledge for middle school students than high school students who have prior exposure to the content (Owen, 2024).

The mean knowledge score of middle school students in a WTP class increased from a baseline of 7.36 points to 12.55 points after the intervention, for an average improvement of 5.19 points. The mean difference was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. The middle school control group baseline mean score was 8.26 and the posttest score was 10.71, with a mean pretest/posttest difference of 2.45. The pretest/posttest percentage change was 71% for the WTP group compared to 30% for the control group. The effect size (Hedge's g) of 1.06 for WTP middle school students was large compared to the moderate effect size of .50 for the control group. The corresponding improvement indexes were +36 percentile points for the WTP middle school students and +19 percentile points for the control group.

The civic knowledge scores of high school SWDs who took a WTP class improved by 3.79 points from pretest (11.84) to posttest (15.63), a statistically significant difference at $p \leq .01$. (See Table 8.) WTP high school students experienced a 32% increase in knowledge after being exposed to the curriculum. The effect size of .66 was moderately large and corresponded to an improvement index of +25 percentile points. The control group students' knowledge increased by 1.78 points from pretest (11.09) to posttest (12.87) which was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ and represented a 16% change. The effect size of .31 for the control group was small and the improvement index was +12 percentile points.

Table 8
Civic Knowledge by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
Students with Disabilities Study

Civic Knowledge				
	Middle School		**High School**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	7.36	8.26	11.84	11.09
Pretest SD	3.96	4.22	5.43	5.42
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	12.55	10.71	15.63	12.87
Posttest SD	5.05	5.22	5.98	6.39
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	5.19	2.45	3.79	1.78
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	.00
Percentage Change	71%	30%	32%	16%
Effect Size	1.06	.50	.66	.31
Improvement Index	+36	+19	+25	+12
Pre/Post Correlation	.50	.47	.49	.54
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,556	937	1,595	619

The ANCOVA analysis revealed statistically significant differences in the adjusted posttest mean scores of the middle and high school WTP and control group students. (See Table 9.) The adjusted mean score of the WTP students was 2.42 points higher than that of the control group, a 19% gap. The effect size of .60 was moderate. The improvement index indicated that the percentile ranking of an average student in the control group would be expected to improve by 23 percentile points if they received the WTP curriculum. The knowledge gains for the high school students who were taught the WTP were significantly greater than those for students in the traditional civics class. The difference in the adjusted mean posttest scores resulting from the ANCOVA analysis was 2.29 points. The WTP students' adjusted posttest mean was 15% higher than that of the control group. The effect size of .42 was moderate and the improvement index was +16 percentile points.

Table 9
ANCOVA Analysis of Civic Knowledge
Students with Disabilities Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	7.36	.10	12.55	.13	12.75	.12	1,556
Control	8.26	.14	10.71	.17	10.33	.15	937

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
2.42	.19	.00	19	.60	+23

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	11.84	.14	15.63	.15	15.52	.13	1,615
Control	11.09	.21	12.87	.25	13.22	.21	620

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
2.29	.24	.00	15	.42	+16

Understanding Core Civics Constructs

Prior to their WTP or standard civics class, students were asked how important they felt it was to know how American government works and to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States. Students assessed how much they felt they had learned about these topics after completing their coursework. They also were asked if they had a better sense of their rights and responsibilities as a citizen because of their class.

A majority of students believed that it was important to know how American government works before they started their WTP or traditional civics class. (See Table 10.) WTP middle and high school students were somewhat more likely to agree that learning about American

government is important than their control group counterparts. A very small percentage of students disagreed with the statement.

Table 10
Importance of How Government Works
Students with Disabilities Study (Pretest)

It is important to know how American government works				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	69%	62%	65%	58%
Neither	26%	32%	29%	33%
Disagree	5%	6%	6%	9%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		.02	
n	1,554	932	1,604	612

A majority of students believed that they understood more about American government and politics after their class. (See Table 11.) This perception is consistent with the significant improvements students made in civic knowledge. WTP students were more likely than students in the comparison group to report that they understood more about American government after taking their class. This coincides with the WTP students' higher knowledge gains compared to the control group. The findings were especially pronounced for middle school students. Eighty percent of middle schoolers who were taught the WTP curriculum agreed that they understood more about American government compared to 63% of the control group—a difference of 17 percentage points. The WTP/control group difference was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. Seventy-four percent of WTP high school students indicated that they understood more about American government compared to 67% of those in the control group. The relationship was statistically significant at $p \leq .02$.

Table 11
Understand More About American Government
Students with Disabilities Study (Posttest)

I understand more about American government because of this class				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	80%	63%	74%	67%
Neither	18%	30%	23%	25%
Disagree	2%	6%	3%	8%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		.02	
n	1,554	932	1,604	612

Before taking their civics class, a majority of SWDs believed that it is important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States. (See Table 12.) A higher percentage of WTP middle school students (65%) agreed than students in the control group (57%). The responses of the high school WTP and control group students were nearly identical, with over 65% indicating that understanding American history is important.

Table 12
Importance of Understanding American History
Students with Disabilities Study (Pretest)

It is important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	65%	57%	66%	67%
Neither	29%	33%	28%	29%
Disagree	6%	9%	6%	4%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,554	932	1,604	612

The posttest trends for understanding more about historical events were similar to the results for American government. (See Table 13.) Seventy-two percent of middle school students reported that they understood more after experiencing the WTP curriculum compared to 61% in the control group. The between-group difference was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. A greater percentage of WTP high school students (72%) indicated that they understood more about historical events than those in the control group (63%). The difference between the high school WTP and control group for understanding historical events was significant at $p \leq .03$.

Table 13
Understand More about Historical Events
Students with Disabilities Study (Posttest)

I understand more about the historical events that shape the United States because I took this class				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	72%	61%	72%	63%
Neither	23%	31%	26%	29%
Disagree	5%	8%	2%	8%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		.03	
n	1,554	932	1,604	612

WTP students were more likely to report that they had a better sense of their rights and responsibilities as citizens after taking their class than the control group. (See Table 14.) Seventy percent of WTP middle schoolers agreed with this statement compared to 64% of the control

group. The gap between the intervention and control group for high school students was slightly larger, with 73% of WTP students agreeing that they had a better sense of their rights as citizens compared to 64% of those who took a standard civics class. The differences between the WTP and control group students were statistically significant for both grade levels.

Table 14
Better Sense of Citizen Rights and Responsibilities
Students with Disabilities Study (Posttest)

I have a better sense of my rights and responsibilities as a citizen because of this class				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	70%	64%	73%	64%
Neither	26%	28%	26%	29%
Disagree	4%	8%	2%	7%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.05		.00	
n	1,554	932	1,604	612

Civic Attentiveness

Students were asked how concerned they were about issues and how much attention they pay to politics. These measures were combined to form an index. Prior to their civics classes, students in the WTP and control conditions' average civic attentiveness was near the midpoint of the index, which ranged from 1 to 9. Students who were taught the WTP curriculum became more interested in issues and attentive to politics than students in the control group. (See Table 15.) The mean score on the civic attentiveness index for middle schoolers who received the WTP curriculum increased by .24 points from 4.87 on the pretest to 5.11 on the posttest, a gain that was significant at $p \leq .01$. The percentage change from pretest to posttest was 5%, the effect size was small (.18), and the improvement index was +7 percentile points. The WTP high school students' average pretest score (5.06) was higher than that of their middle school counterparts (4.81). The WTP high schoolers' posttest mean (5.36) increased by .30, and the pretest/posttest mean difference was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. The percentage increase for WTP high schoolers was 6%, the effect size was .19, and the improvement index was +8 percentile points. The high school control group students' average civic attentiveness score increased by .14 points, which was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. The ANCOVA analysis found small, statistically significant differences in the adjusted posttest means favoring the WTP group for both middle and high school students. (See Table 16.)

Table 15
Attentiveness by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
Students with Disabilities Study

Attentiveness				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	4.87	4.76	5.06	4.81
Pretest SD	1.80	1.82	1.81	1.78
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	5.11	4.87	5.36	5.05
Posttest SD	1.82	1.85	1.81	1.83
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.24	.11	.30	.24
Sign. Difference	.00	.05	.00	.00
Percentage Change	5%	2%	6%	4%
Effect Size	.18	.06	.19	.14
Improvement Index	+7	+2	+8	+5
Pre/Post Correlation	.46	.45	.55	.57
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,554	923	1,599	611

Table 16
ANCOVA Analysis of Civic Attentiveness
Students with Disabilities Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	4.87	.04	5.11	.05	5.12	.04	1,554
Control	4.76	.06	4.87	.07	4.90	.05	923

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
.22	.07	.00	4%	.12	+5

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	5.06	.05	5.36	.05	5.38	.04	1,599
Control	4.81	.07	5.05	.07	5.14	.06	611

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
.24	.07	.01	4%	.13	+5

Interest in Government and Public Affairs

Middle and high school students in classes with high percentages of SWDs that were taught WTP became more interested in government and public affairs than students who received the standard curriculum. (See Table 17.) Thirty-five percent of WTP middle school students reported being more interested in government and public affairs compared to 25% of control group students, a difference of 10 percentage points. Ten percent of WTP middle school students were less interested compared to 15% of the control group. The difference between the middle school groups was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. A higher percentage of WTP high school students (39%) became more interested in politics compared to the control group (31%). Fewer WTP students (7%) became less interested in government and public affairs than their counterparts in the control group (11%). The difference between the groups was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 17
Interest in Government and Public Affairs
Students with Disabilities Study (Posttest)

Since taking this class, are you more or less interested in government and public affairs?				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
More Interested	35%	25%	39%	31%
About the Same	55%	61%	54%	58%
Less Interested	10%	15%	7%	11%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		.02	
n	1,523	907	1,579	614

Keeping Informed

Following their class, WTP students were more likely to feel that keeping informed about what is going on in their community was very important than students in the control group. (See Table 18.) The percentage of WTP students who felt it was very important to keep informed was greater for high schoolers than middle schoolers. Thirty-three percent of WTP middle schoolers responded that keeping informed was very important compared to 27% of the control group students. More control group middle schoolers (15%) than WTP students (9%) felt that keeping informed was not very important. Forty percent of WTP high schoolers felt that keeping informed was very important compared to 30% of the control group, a 10-percentage point difference. Five percent of WTP high school students felt that keeping informed was not very important compared to 13% of the control group. The differences between the WTP and control groups for both middle and high school students were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 18
Importance of Keeping Informed
Students with Disabilities Study (Posttest)

How important is it for you to keep informed about what is going on in your community?				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Very Important	33%	27%	40%	30%
Somewhat Important	58%	58%	55%	57%
Not Very Important	9%	15%	5%	13%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.01		.00	
n	1,523	906	1,579	616

Political Efficacy

The percentage of students who agreed that they have a say in what government does increased significantly for the WTP middle and high school students. (See Table 19.) The percentage of WTP middle school students who felt they could influence government improved from 20% on the pretest to 32% on the posttest, while the percentage who disagreed declined from 30% to 24%. In contrast, the increase in the number of students who felt that they had a say in government was minimal for the middle school control group. There was an 11-percentage point increase in efficacy for the WTP high school students. Twenty-six percent of WTP students agreed that they had a say on the pretest compared to 37% on the posttest. There was a smaller uptick in efficacy for the control group high school students from 25% on the pretest to 30% on the posttest. The chi square tests of the difference between the WTP and control groups were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ for both grade levels.

Table 19
Political Efficacy by Grade Level and Condition
Students with Disabilities Study

I have a say in what government does.				
Middle School				
	WTP		Control Group	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Agree	20%	32%	22%	25%
Neither	50%	46%	49%	50%
Disagree	30%	24%	29%	25%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,523		906	

I have a say in what government does.				
High School				
	WTP		Control	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Agree	26%	37%	25%	30%
Neither	50%	47%	50%	49%
Disagree	24%	16%	25%	31%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,579		616	

Communication and Civil Discourse Skills

Students were asked a battery of items about their ability to express their opinions and engage in civil discussions with others which were combined in an index. The communication and civil discourse skills of middle and high school students in WTP classes improved significantly after the intervention. (See Table 20.) The findings were stronger for high school students than middle schoolers. Middle school WTP students' average score on the civil discourse index increased from 8.03 on the pretest to 8.89 on the posttest, a mean difference of .58 which was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. The pretest/posttest percentage change was 11%, the effect size was .22, and the improvement index was +9. Middle school control group students' average score on the index increased from 7.86 to 8.35, a difference of .48. The percentage change was 6%, and the effect size of .18 was negligible. The communication and civil discourse index scores of WTP high school students improved from a pretest average of 8.29 to a posttest average of 9.20. The mean difference of .91 was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. The effect size was notably larger than for middle school students at .34. After being exposed to the WTP curriculum intervention, the percentile ranking of the average high school student improved by 13 points. The average posttest score on the communication and civil discourse index of high school students in the control group increased from 7.91 to 8.71, a pretest/posttest mean difference of .25. The percentage change was 10%, and the effect size of .25 translated to an improvement index of +9 percentile points.

Table 20
Communication and Civil Discourse Skills by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
Students with Disabilities Study

Communication and Civil Discourse Skills				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	8.03	7.86	8.29	7.91
Pretest SD	2.60	2.54	2.52	2.54
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	8.89	8.35	9.20	8.71
Posttest SD	2.47	2.64	2.55	2.66
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.58	.48	.91	.80
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	.00
Percentage Change	11%	6%	17%	10%
Effect Size	.26	.18	.34	.25
Improvement Index	+9	+6	+13	+9
Pre/Post Correlation	.44	.43	.44	.46
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,554	923	1,599	611

The ANCOVA analysis confirmed that the control group students in middle and high school made smaller gains in communication and civil discourse skills than WTP students. (See Table 21.) The adjusted posttest mean difference of .35 represented a 5% difference between the scores of the WTP and control group middle school students. The effect size of .17 corresponded to an improvement index of +6 percentile points. WTP high school students' adjusted mean posttest score (9.15) was significantly greater than that of the control group (8.77). The adjusted posttest mean differences for middle and high school were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 21
ANCOVA Analysis of Communication and Civil Discourse Skills
Students with Disabilities Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	8.33	.07	9.04	.07	8.82	.07	1,554
Control	7.86	.09	8.37	.09	8.47	.08	923

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
.35	.10	.00	5%	.17	+6

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	8.29	.06	9.20	.06	9.15	.06	1,599
Control	7.91	.11	8.71	.11	8.77	.09	611

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
.38	.11	.00	4%	.15	+6

Teamwork and Collaboration Skills

Students' teamwork and collaboration skills were measured on an index that reflected their willingness to share ideas, work with others who are different from themselves, and come to consensus when working with others. The pretest/posttest changes in mean scores on the index were modest. (See Table 22.) The average pretest scores for all students were just above the midpoint of the index, which ranged from 1 to 7. The WTP high school students' mean scores improved more than those of students in the other categories, but the change was small. The pretest/posttest mean difference for WTP high schoolers was .16 points and the percentage change was 4%. The effect size of .14 was small and corresponded to an improvement index of +6 percentile points. The average teamwork and collaboration score of the WTP middle school students and the high school control group improved slightly, but the effect was negligible. The pretest/posttest mean difference for the middle school control group was nonsignificant.

Table 22
Teamwork and Collaboration Skills by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
Students with Disabilities Study

Teamwork and Collaboration Skills				
	Middle School		**High School**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	3.91	3.91	3.85	3.88
Pretest SD	1.00	.99	.95	.93
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	3.99	3.95	4.01	3.97
Posttest SD	.96	.95	.93	.95
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.08	.04	.16	.09
Sign. Difference	.05	NS	.00	.02
Percentage Change	2%	1%	4%	2%
Effect Size	.03	.03	.14	.08
Improvement Index	+1	+1	+6	+3
Pre/Post Correlation	.25	.23	.24	.26
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,543	923	1,599	611

The ANCOVA analysis found no meaningful differences between the WTP and control groups for either grade level. (See Table 23.)

Table 23
ANCOVA Analysis of Teamwork and Collaboration Skills
Students with Disabilities Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	3.91	.02	3.99	.02	3.96	.02	1,543
Control	3.91	.02	3.95	.02	3.93	.03	923

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
.03	.04	NS	<1%	.00	--

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	3.85	.02	4.01	.02	4.00	.02	1,599
Control	3.88	.03	3.97	.04	3.95	.03	611

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
.05	.04	NS	1%	.01	--

Media Literacy Skills

Students indicated if they had learned four media literacy skills in their WTP or traditional civics class. A majority of students in both the intervention and control groups reported that they had been taught media literacy skills. (See Table 24.) Over 70% of students responded that they had learned how to tell if a news source is reliable, including 77% of WTP middle school and 79% of WTP high school students. These percentages were significantly higher than for the control group middle school (71%) and high school (73%) groups. A somewhat smaller percentage of students learned how to detect misinformation. Sixty-five percent of WTP middle school students were taught how to detect misinformation compared to 56% of the control group. Students in high school were more likely to learn to detect information than middle schoolers, with 73% of WTP and 66% of control group students responding affirmatively. Of the four media literacy skills, students were the least likely to claim that they had learned how to use social media to send information responsibly. High school students (WTP 62%/control 63%) were more likely than middle school students (WTP 57%/control 54%) to indicate that they had acquired this skill in their classes. There were no statistically significant differences between the WTP and control groups for either grade level. More than 70% of middle school students indicated that they learned how to determine if a website is a good source of information. The difference between the middle school groups was not statistically significant.

There was a significant difference between the high school WTP (81%) and control (74%) groups on this literacy skill.

Table 24
Media Literacy Skills
Students with Disabilities Study (Posttest/Year 2)

How to tell if a news source is reliable				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Yes	77%	71%	79%	73%
No	23%	29%	21%	27%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.03		.01	
n	629	451	611	365

How to detect misinformation				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Yes	65%	56%	73%	66%
No	35%	44%	27%	34%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.01		.01	
n	629	451	611	365

How to use social media to send information responsibly				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Yes	57%	54%	62%	63%
No	43%	46%	38%	37%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		NS	
n	629	451	611	365

How to determine if a website is a good source of information				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Yes	76%	72%	81%	74%
No	24%	28%	19%	26%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		.01	
n	629	451	611	365

Civic Engagement

WTP middle and high school students felt more prepared to participate in their community following the intervention. (See Table 25.) Prior to their WTP class 32% of middle school students agreed that they were better prepared to participate which increased to 40% post-program. The middle school control group made small gains on this indicator. The WTP high school students' belief that they were more prepared to take part in their community increased by 10 percentage points from 31% to 41% following their WTP experience. There also was an increase in the percentage of high school control group students who reported being more prepared to engage in their community, but the gain was smaller than for the WTP students. The pretest/posttest differences for all relationships were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 25
Prepared to Participate by Grade Level and Condition

I feel prepared to participate in my community				
Middle School				
	WTP		**Control Group**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	32%	40%	32%	35%
Neither	53%	52%	55%	51%
Disagree	15%	8%	13%	14%
X^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,547		926	

High School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	31%	41%	31%	35%
Neither	57%	53%	56%	52%
Disagree	12%	6%	13%	13%
X^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,581		623	

Following their WTP class, middle and high school students were more likely to volunteer to help others. (See Table 26.) The percentage of middle school WTP students who volunteered increased from 52% to 58%. Volunteering among the control group middle schoolers did not change, with 48% indicating that they volunteered. Fifty-six percent of WTP high school students reported that they volunteered to help others following the class, up from 48%. The pretest/posttest differences were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ for the middle school WTP students, the high school WTP students, and the high school control group.

Table 26
Volunteer by Grade Level and Condition
Students with Disabilities Study

I volunteer to help others				
Middle School				
	WTP		**Control Group**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	52%	58%	48%	48%
Neither	37%	36%	41%	41%
Disagree	11%	6%	11%	11%
X^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,547		926	

High School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	48%	56%	49%	51%
Neither	44%	38%	41%	42%
Disagree	8%	6%	10%	7%
X^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,581		623	

After their civics class, students were asked if they planned on voting in elections if they were eligible. WTP middle and high school students were more likely than those in the control group to indicate an intention to vote. (See Table 27.) Sixty-one percent of WTP middle school students planned on voting compared to 52% of the control group. The gap between the WTP and control groups was greater for high school students. Sixty-six percent of WTP high schoolers planned on voting compared to 52% of the control group, a difference of 14 percentage points. The between-group differences for middle and high school were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 27
Plan on Voting in Elections
Students with Disabilities Study (Posttest)

I plan on voting in elections if I am eligible				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	61%	52%	66%	52%
Neither	30%	35%	30%	38%
Disagree	9%	12%	4%	10%
X^2 Difference Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,531	920	1,577	614

ENGLISH LEARNER STUDY

Defining English Learners

English learners are defined under 20 U.S.C. § 7801(2) under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as "K-12 students whose native language is not English, and whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English may affect their academic success in classrooms where instruction is in English." Once students become proficient in English, they are no longer considered ELs (Government Accountability Office, 2024). School districts have taken steps to promote English proficiency among ELs. English language instructional education programs were available to 93% of ELs in 2021 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2024). Federal guidance for providing consistent standards for teaching ELs was first issued in 2015 by the U.S. Department of Education. This guidance was rescinded by the Education Department in August of 2025, arguing that the document was "overly prescriptive" (Meckler and McDaniel, 2025).

The population of ELs in K-12 public schools has been increasing steadily over the past three decades (Balconi and Spitzman, 2021). In the period between 2010 and 2020, the percentage of ELs in public schools rose from 9.4% (4.6 million students) to 10.6% (5.3 million students) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2024). While more than 10% of the students in 13 states are ELs, they are most heavily concentrated in Texas (20.2%), California (18.9%), and New Mexico (18.8%). Most ELs are born in the U.S. (Government Accountability Office, 2024). They speak over 400 different languages and represent a vast array of cultures and backgrounds. Spanish is by far the most common home language and is spoken by 76.4% of ELs, followed by Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Russian, Haitian, Hmong, and Urdu. The percentage of ELs is highest in lower grades and decreases incrementally across grade levels. In 2021, 14.7% of ELs were kindergarteners, 10.5% were 6th graders, 9.0% were 8th graders, and 6.1% were 12th graders (National Center for Education Statistics, 2024).

Civic Education for English Learners

Language barriers are substantial obstacles to engagement in civic life which requires access to accurate information, understanding of how political institutions and processes work, and participatory skills. Non-native speakers may lack opportunities to develop civic awareness and skills which can lead to feeling isolated, marginalized, and distrustful. Civic education can be an antidote to these trends by developing positive democratic capacities in young people.

English learners constitute a substantial segment of the American K-12 student population. Civics, social studies, and American government teachers instructing ELs face inherent challenges, especially as students either lack the background knowledge and vocabulary central to understanding American history and government (Cruz and Thornton, 2009) or have knowledge that differs from textbook accounts (Scardina, 2018). Many civics teachers feel unprepared to integrate language learning as they convey content (Gui and de Oliveira, 2024). At the same time, ELs can draw upon their culture and perspectives to enrich the civic education experience for all students. An emerging body of research has found that quality civic education can be effective, even critical, to ELs' development of the knowledge, dispositions, capacities, and skills necessary for meaningful civic engagement (Cruz and Thornton, 2014).

The civics curriculum offers regular occasions for developing vocabulary and language skills. Most ELs take civics classes with native English speakers which is mutually beneficial. Promoting interactive learning between ELs and English-speaking students through class discussions and group work can improve academic achievement for all learners. Interventions that provide students with regular opportunities to engage in storytelling, make presentations, read, research, and write can lead to greater participation among EL students and their classmates (Cruz and Thornton, 2014). These elements are central to the WTP curriculum.

Having EL students in the civics classroom offers teachers a unique opportunity to explore students' identities as global citizens as well as to discover their place in their local communities and the nation. Inquiry-based approaches that are question-driven, interactive and collaborative, and foster community connection can build bridges between language, culture, and content. Learning that involves examining multiple sources of information and examining different perspectives on issues and events can be connected to developing languages skills (Bartholomae, 2025). Integrating English language arts into the civics curriculum can be effective in having students engage in democratic dialogue and problem-solving through conversations that develop communication skills among ELs and their English-speaking peers (Mirra, 2022).

Civics and social studies teachers are prepared to convey subject matter content to students but often are not experienced in developing competency in English literacy (de Jong, Harper, and Coady, 2013). Teachers who are provided with the instructional approaches, tools, and curricula that are conducive to educating ELs are most successful in conveying civic knowledge and competencies to this student population (Gui and de Oliveira, 2022). The JMLPE provided teachers with professional learning and support to integrate English literacy learning as they instructed the WTP curriculum.

Impact Evaluation: English Learner Study

The impact evaluation compares the students of teachers who received the JMLPE PL and implemented the adapted WTP curriculum in their classes with a high percentage (35% or more) of ELs. Typically, ELs were in civics classes with the general student population. The comparison group consists of teachers who did not receive the JMLPE PL program and instructed conventional civics classes with a high percentage of ELs. The study also compares students who are native-level English speakers (NLE) to English learners.

Teachers who met the criteria of being certified in teaching ELs and who were scheduled to instruct a civics, social studies, American government, or history class with a high percentage (35% or more) of ELs were recruited for the research. Schools/teachers were randomly assigned to the JMLPE intervention or "business as usual" control condition. All students whose teachers were in the intervention and control groups were recruited for the study. A total of 86 teachers from 80 schools and their students were enrolled in the JMLPE EL intervention and completed the research requirements. Thirty-nine teachers from 36 schools and their students constituted the control group. The sample consisted of 4,051 students who completed the testing. Middle school was defined as grades six through eight, and high school included grades nine through twelve. The sample included 1,899 middle school students, of whom 1,221 were taught the WTP curriculum and 678 were in the control group. There were 2,152 high school students in the study, 1,460 in the WTP intervention group and 692 in the comparison group. A subsample analysis of individual students based on their status as native-level English speakers and English learners was conducted in Year 2. The total sample size was 1,693, which was sufficiently powered. (See Table 28.)

Table 28
Sample Size
English Learners Study

	Year 1 (2023-24)	Year 2 (2024-25)	Total
JMLPE	1,725	956	2,681
Middle School	842	379	1,221
High School	883	577	1,460
Control	633	737	1,370
Middle School	364	314	678
High School	269	423	692
Total	2,358	1,693	4,051

Student Characteristics

The characteristics of the students in the WTP intervention and control groups were similar with a few exceptions. (See Table 29.) The gender composition of the middle and high school students in the WTP and control groups were nearly identical. There were some differences in the race/ethnicity of the middle and high school samples. The WTP sample had a

higher percentage of Black students, and the control group had more Latine students, especially at the high school level. The differences in the ages of the WTP and control group middle school students were negligible. The high school WTP sample had more 14-year-olds than the control group while the control group had a higher percentage of 17-year-olds.

Table 29
Demographic Characteristics
English Learners Study

Demographic Characteristics				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Gender				
Male	49%	46%	50%	48%
Female	49%	52%	48%	50%
Race/Ethnicity				
Asian/AAPI	6%	10%	9%	5%
Black	14%	7%	29%	12%
Latine	39%	44%	33%	51%
White	28%	23%	19%	23%
Multiple Races	13%	16%	10%	9%
Age				
12	10%	7%	--	--
13	16%	13%	--	--
14	68%	69%	6%	2%
15	6%	11%	41%	33%
16	--	--	20%	19%
17	--	--	27%	37%
18	--	--	6%	9%

In Year 2, data on individual students' language use at home and school were collected. (See Table 30.) According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 22% of people age five and older speak a

language other than English at home. Sixty-one percent of people who spoke a language other than English spoke Spanish (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025). Overall, 64% of students in the study reported that English was their heritage language. The pattern was similar for the middle and high school WTP and control groups. A slightly higher percentage of students indicated that English was the language spoken at home than reported that English was their heritage language. The percentage was slightly lower for the high school control group. After English, Spanish was the language spoken at home most often which is consistent with the national trend. Around 60% of students only spoke English at school while nearly 38% spoke English and a heritage language. A very small percentage spoke only a heritage language at school. Students who spoke English and a heritage language and only a language other than English at school were combined into a single category of English learners. Sixty-two percent of students in the research were classified as having native-level English competency (NLEs) and 38% as ELs.

Table 30
Students' Language
(Year 2)

Students' Language				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
English Heritage Language	65%	66%	64%	62%
Language Spoken at Home				
English	68%	68%	69%	62%
Spanish	27%	25%	24%	35%
Another Language	5%	7%	7%	3%
Language Spoken at School				
English Only	61%	62%	62%	59%
English and Heritage Language	38%	37%	36%	38%
Heritage Language Only	1%	1%	2%	3%

Civic Knowledge

A primary objective of the WTP and standard civics classes is to convey content knowledge about the American founding, the Constitution, and government institutions to students. The civic knowledge of middle and high school students in classes with high percentages of ELs who were taught WTP increased significantly from pretest to posttest (See Table 31.) The knowledge gains were greater for WTP students than the control group. Middle school WTP students showed the greatest improvements in knowledge. Their mean score on the knowledge index increased by 4.53 points from pretest (7.32) to posttest (11.85). The mean difference was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. This difference marks a 62% improvement in middle school students' civic knowledge scores after their WTP class. The effect size (Hedge's g) of 1.02 was large and corresponded to an improvement index of +37 percentile points. The civic knowledge of students in the control group also improved significantly, but the magnitude of the pretest/posttest increase was smaller. Their mean knowledge index scores rose from pretest

(6.92) to posttest (8.91) by 1.98 points, a 28% improvement. The effect size of .38 was moderate and the associated improvement index was +15 percentile points.

The trend was similar for high school students, although the knowledge gains were smaller. (See Table 31.) High school students have more experience with civics than middle schoolers, and their pre-program knowledge scores are typically higher (Owen, 2024). The mean scores of WTP high school students improved by 3.77 points from pretest (11.74) to posttest (15.51), a difference that was statistically significant at p≤.01. The control group's knowledge increased by 2.20 points, from 10.33 on the pretest to 12.53 on the posttest, which also was significant. The WTP high school students' knowledge increased by 32% compared to 21% for the control group. The effect size of .65 was moderate/large for the WTP high schoolers compared to a moderate effect size of .41 for the control group. The improvement index scores were +24 percentile points for the WTP students and +16 for the control group.

Table 31
Students' Civic Knowledge by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
English Learner Study

Civic Knowledge				
	Middle School		**High School**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	7.32	6.92	11.74	10.33
Pretest SD	3.94	4.03	5.45	5.06
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	11.85	8.91	15.51	12.53
Posttest SD	5.21	5.00	5.99	5.75
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	4.53	1.98	3.77	2.20
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	.00
Percentage Change	62%	28%	32%	21%
Effect Size	1.02	.38	.65	.41
Improvement Index	+37	+15	+24	+16
Pre/Post Correlation	.56	.36	.48	.53
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,221	678	1,460	692

Students in classes with high percentages of ELs who were taught WTP had significantly greater civic knowledge gains than those who were taught a traditional civics curriculum. (See Table 32.) The ANCOVA analysis adjusts for differences in mean knowledge scores at baseline (pretest) and computes adjusted mean posttest knowledge scores. The mean difference in adjusted mean posttest scores for the WTP middle school students (11.76) and the control group (9.07) was 2.69 points and was statistically significant at p≤.01. The improvement index indicated that the civic knowledge score of an average middle school student in the control group would improve by 20 percentile points if they received the WTP intervention. A similar gap of 2.22 points was evident for high school WTP students' adjusted posttest knowledge index mean (15.27) and the control group's adjusted mean (13.07). The difference in adjusted posttest means

was statistically significant. The improvement index for high school students was +14 percentile points.

Table 32
ANCOVA Analysis of Civic Knowledge
English Learner Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	7.32	.11	11.85	.15	11.76	.13	1,221
Control	6.92	.12	8.92	.19	9.07	.17	678

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
2.69	.22	.00	23%	.53	+20

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	11.74	.14	15.51	.15	15.27	.13	1,460
Control	10.33	.19	12.53	.21	13.07	.19	692

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
2.22	.24	.00	14%	.37	+14

Understanding of Core Civics Constructs

Before their WTP or standard civics class, students were asked if they felt that it was important to know how American government works. (See Table 33.) Seventy percent or more of WTP middle school, WTP high school, and high school control group students agreed. A significantly smaller percentage of middle school control group students (54%) believed it is important to learn about how government works. A slight percentage of students in all groups disagreed.

Table 33
Importance of How Government Works
English Learner Study (Pretest)

It is important to know how American government works				
	Middle School		**High School**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	70%	54%	76%	72%
Neither	25%	37%	22%	25%
Disagree	5%	9%	2%	3%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,221	678	1,456	691

Students indicated that they understood more about American government after taking their WTP or standard civics class. (See Table 34.) This perception was consistent with the findings of significant gains in students' content knowledge after their civics instruction. WTP middle school students (73%) were notably more inclined to feel that they had learned more about American government from their class than students in the control group (55%). The difference between the middle school groups was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. A slightly higher percentage of WTP high school students (73%) reported understanding more about government than students in the control group (69%).

Table 34
Understand More About American Government
English Learner Study (Posttest)

I understand more about American government because of this class				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	73%	55%	73%	69%
Neither	23%	35%	23%	25%
Disagree	4%	10%	4%	6%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,219	679	1,456	689

A majority of students felt it was important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States prior to their civics class. (See Table 35.) Over 65% of WTP middle school, WTP high school, and high school control group students agreed. About half of middle school control group students believed it was important to understand American history. The difference between the middle school WTP and control group students on this item was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 35
Importance of Understanding American History
English Learner Study (Pretest)

It is important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	67%	53%	68%	68%
Neither	27%	37%	27%	28%
Disagree	6%	10%	5%	4%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,220	678	1,455	688

Over 70% of WTP middle and high school students indicated that they understood more about the historical events that shape the United States after taking their class. (See Table 36.) Once again, the percentage of WTP middle school students (74%) who agreed was substantially higher than the control group (51%). There was a 23-percentage point difference between the middle school WTP and control groups that was statistically significant at p≤.01. The percentage of WTP (72%) and control (68%) group high school students who felt that they understood more about historical events was small and nonsignificant.

Table 36
Understand More about Historical Events
English Learner Study (Posttest)

I understand more about the historical events that shape the United States because I took this class				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	74%	51%	72%	68%
Neither	22%	38%	24%	27%
Disagree	4%	11%	4%	5%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,220	678	1,455	688

Middle and high school students gained a better sense of their rights and responsibilities as citizens after their WTP class. (See Table 37.) Over 70% of WTP middle school students felt that they had a better sense of their rights and responsibilities compared to 56% of the control group. This pattern was consistent with the middle school findings for understanding American government and history. A higher percentage of WTP high school students (75%) than control group students (70%) agreed that they had a better sense of their rights and responsibilities post-intervention. The differences between the WTP and control groups was statistically significant at p≤.01 for all middle and high school groups.

Table 37
Better Sense of Citizen Rights and Responsibilities
English Learner Study (Posttest)

I have a better sense of my rights and responsibilities as a citizen because of this class				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	73%	56%	75%	70%
Neither	23%	35%	23%	24%
Disagree	4%	10%	2%	6%
X^2 Difference Sign.	.00		.01	
n	1,221	677	1,454	618

Civic Attentiveness

Students were moderately concerned about issues and attentive to political affairs prior to their civics classes. The average scores on civic attentiveness index, which ranged from 1 to 9, were near the midpoint for all students. The differences in mean scores from pretest to posttest were statistically significant, but modest. (See Table 38.) Middle school WTP students' mean score on the civic attentiveness index increased by .29 points. The small effect size of .17 corresponded to an improvement index of +7 percentile points. The middle school control group mean difference of .19 represented a 4% change from pretest to posttest. The effect size of .09 was insubstantial. There was little difference in the WTP high school students' average scores on the civic attentiveness index. The high school control group students' score improved by .26 points, indicating a 5% improvement. The effect size of .16 was small and the improvement index was +6 percentile points.

Table 38
Students' Attentiveness by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
English Learner Study

Attentiveness				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	4.71	4.75	5.08	4.84
Pretest SD	1.74	1.77	1.80	1.76
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	5.01	4.94	5.23	5.10
Posttest SD	1.77	1.78	1.89	1.86
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.29	.19	.15	.26
Sign. Difference	.00	.02	.00	.00
Percentage Change	6%	4%	3%	5%
Effect Size	.17	.09	.08	.16
Improvement Index	+7	+3	+3	+6
Pre/Post Correlation	.44	.37	.52	.59
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,217	676	1,439	611

The ANCOVA analysis found minimal between group differences in the adjusted posttest index means for both grade levels. The differences between the WTP and control groups were not statistically significant. (See Table 39.)

Table 39
ANCOVA Analysis of Students' Civic Attentiveness
English Learner Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	4.71	.05	5.01	.05	5.00	.05	1,217
Control	4.75	.07	4.94	.07	4.94	.07	676

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
.06	.09	NS	--	--	--

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	5.08	.05	5.23	.05	5.20	.04	1,439
Control	4.84	.07	5.10	.07	5.17	.06	611

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
.03	.08	NS	--	--	--

Interest in Government and Public Affairs

Nearly 40% of WTP middle school students and high school students in both conditions reported that they became more interested in government and public affairs after the intervention. (See Table 40.) A notably smaller percentage of middle schoolers in the control group (23%) became more politically interested than students in the WTP group (38%). In fact, 16% of the middle school control group became less interested in government and public affairs compared to 8% who were taught WTP. The difference between the middle school WTP and control groups was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. In contrast, there was virtually no difference in the findings for high school students.

Table 40
Interest in Government and Public Affairs
English Learner Study (Posttest)

Since taking this class, are you more or less interested in government and public affairs?				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
More Interested	38%	23%	39%	38%
About the Same	54%	61%	53%	53%
Less Interested	8%	16%	8%	9%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,210	664	1,433	612

WTP middle school students were more likely to feel that keeping informed about what is going on in their community is important than students in the control condition. (See Table 41.) Ninety percent of WTP middle schoolers felt it was at least somewhat important to keep informed, with 32% indicating that it was very important. Of the middle school control group, 82% believed it was important to keep informed, with 24% reporting that it was very important. The difference between the middle school WTP and control groups on this indicator was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. A higher percentage of WTP high school students (40%) felt it was very important to keep informed about community affairs than control group students (35%). The difference between the high school intervention and control group responses on this indicator was not statistically significant.

Table 41
Importance of Keeping Informed
English Learner Study (Posttest)

How important is it for you to keep informed about what is going on in your community?				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Very Important	32%	24%	40%	35%
Somewhat Important	58%	58%	53%	57%
Not Very Important	10%	18%	7%	8%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,210	664	1,433	612

Political Efficacy

WTP students' sense of internal political efficacy—the belief that they have a say in what government does—increased significantly after their WTP experience. (See Table 42.) The percentage of WTP middle school students indicating that they have a say in government increased from 19% to 30%, an 11-percentage point improvement. The political efficacy of middle school control group students increased by 5 percentage points, from 22% to 27%. High school students in post conditions were more likely to state that they had a say in government after their class. The WTP students who felt efficacious increased from 26% to 36%, a 10-percentage point gain. The gain was somewhat greater for the high school control group, as 23% agreed that they had a say in government on the pretest compared to 36% on the posttest. The pretest/posttest differences were statistically significant across the board.

Table 42
Pretest/Posttest Political Efficacy by Grade Level and Condition
English Learner Study

I have a say in what government does				
Middle School				
	WTP		**Control Group**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	19%	30%	22%	27%
Neither	52%	50%	52%	51%
Disagree	29%	20%	26%	22%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,222		659	

High School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	26%	36%	23%	36%
Neither	51%	49%	52%	44%
Disagree	23%	15%	25%	20%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,443		621	

Communication and Civil Discourse Skills

Students' communication and civil discourse skills were measured by an index tapping their comfort in speaking in front of a group, willingness to share their views, their involvement in class discussions, and their willingness to respect the views of those with whom they disagree. Scores on communication and civil discourse index improved significantly from pretest to posttest. (See Table 43.) Average scores on the pretest were above the midpoint of the index which ranged from 1 to 13. WTP middle school students' average score on the index improved by .66 points, from 8.24 on the pretest to 8.91 on the posttest. The control group's mean index score increased by .50 points from 7.45 to 7.96. The WTP middle school students' scores improved by 8% compared to 6% for the control group. The improvement index scores indicated gains of +10 and +6 percentile points respectively. The communication and civil discourse skills of WTP high school students showed the greatest improvement. Their mean index score increased by .92 points from 8.24 to 9.16, an 11% gain. The moderate effect size of .34 converted to an improvement index score of +13 percentile points. The high school control group's average score rose by .71 points from 7.94 to 8.65. The percentage change was 8%, the effect size was .26, and the improvement index was +10 percentile points. The pretest/posttest mean differences were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ for all grade levels and conditions.

Table 43
Communication and Civil Discourse Skills by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
English Learner Study

Communication and Civil Discourse Skills				
	Middle School		**High School**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	8.24	7.45	8.24	7.94
Pretest SD	2.53	2.53	2.50	2.47
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	8.91	7.96	9.16	8.65
Posttest SD	2.41	2.75	2.57	2.72
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.66	.50	.92	.71
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	.00
Percentage Change	8%	6%	11%	8%
Effect Size	.25	.17	.34	.26
Improvement Index	+10	+6	+13	+10
Pre/Post Correlation	.41	.42	.45	.47
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,119	661	1,441	623

The ANCOVA analysis results demonstrated that the difference between the WTP and control group adjusted posttest mean communication and civil discourse index score was statistically significant for both middle and high school. (See Table 44.) The adjusted posttest mean difference for middle school was .62, with an effect size of .24. The percentile ranking based on scores on the communication and civil discourse index of an average control group student would increase by 9 points after receiving the WTP intervention. The adjusted posttest mean difference between WTP and control group high school students was .34. The small effect size of .13 translated to an improvement index score of +5 percentile points.

Table 44
ANCOVA Analysis of Communication and Civil Discourse Skills
English Learner Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	8.24	.07	8.91	.07	8.80	.07	1,119
Control	7.45	.11	7.96	.12	8.18	.10	661

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
.62	.13	.00	7%	.24	+9

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	8.24	.07	9.16	.07	9.11	.07	1,441
Control	7.94	.10	8.65	.11	8.76	.09	623

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
.34	.11	.00	4%	.13	+5

Teamwork and Collaboration Skills

Teamwork and collaboration skills were measured on an index that reflected the extent to which students shared their ideas, got along well with people different from themselves, and could arrive at consensus when working with others. Students' scores in all conditions were at the high end of the index, which ranged from 1 to 7, from the outset. (See Table 45.) Middle school WTP students made small, statistically significant gains on the teamwork and collaboration skills index. Their average score increased from 6.00 to 6.26 from pretest to posttest, a difference of .26 points marking a 4% change. The small effect size of .11 corresponded to an improvement index of +4 percentile points. There were no statistically significant changes in mean index scores for the middle school control group, high school WTP students, and the high school control group.

The adjusted posttest mean score on the teamwork and collaboration skills index was significantly higher for the WTP middle school students (6.02) than the control group (5.64) based on the ANCOVA analysis. (See Table 46.) The adjusted pretest/posttest group difference of .34 indicated that the WTP group's adjusted mean was 6% higher than the control group mean. The effect size of .19 corresponded to an improvement index score of +8 percentile points. The difference of adjusted posttest means for the high school students was small and nonsignificant.

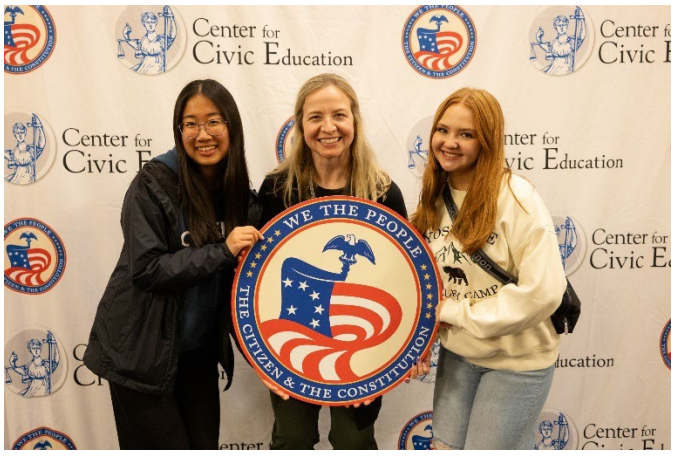

Table 45
Teamwork and Collaboration Skills by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
English Learner Study

Teamwork and Collaboration Skills				
	Middle School		**High School**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	6.00	5.66	6.02	6.09
Pretest SD	1.82	1.79	1.80	1.83
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	6.26	5.67	6.04	6.21
Posttest SD	2.07	2.02	2.08	2.01
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.26	.01	.02	.12
Sign. Difference	.00	NS	NS	NS
Percentage Change	4%	--	--	2%
Effect Size	.11	.00	.00	.05
Improvement Index	+4	--	--	+2
Pre/Post Correlation	.27	.31	.25	.32
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,111	592	1,398	616

Table 46
ANCOVA Analysis of Teamwork and Collaboration Skills
English Learner Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	6.00	.05	6.26	.06	6.02	.06	1,111
Control	5.66	.08	5.67	.09	5.64	.09	592

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
.37	.11	.00	6%	.19	+8

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	6.02	.09	6.04	.09	6.11	.05	1,398
Control	6.09	.04	6.21	.07	6.05	.08	616

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
.06	.09	NS	--	--	--

Media Literacy Skills

Students in both the WTP and control groups reported that core media literacy skills were covered in their classes. (See Table 47.) These topics were taught more frequently in high school than middle school. The media literacy skill covered most often was how to determine if a website is a good source of information. Around 70% of middle school students indicated that they learned how to tell if a news source is reliable compared to 78% of WTP and 76% of control group high school students. The grade level difference was starker for learning how to detect misinformation. Fifty-five percent of WTP and control group middle schoolers reported that they learned how to detect misinformation. A significantly higher percentage of WTP high school students (73%) learned to detect misinformation than students in the control group (67%). WTP middle and high school students were more likely to have learned how to use social media to send information responsibly than their counterparts in the control group. The differences for middle school (WTP 61%/control 54%) and high school (WTP 66%/control 60%) were statistically significant. A higher percentage of WTP middle school students (73%) learned how to determine if a website is a good source of information than the control group (66%); the difference was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. A large majority of WTP high school students (81%) and control (77%) group students were taught this skill.

Table 47
Media Literacy Skills
English Learner Study (Posttest/Year 2)

How to tell if a news source is reliable				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Yes	69%	70%	78%	76%
No	31%	30%	22%	24%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		NS	
n	358	278	551	411

How to detect misinformation				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Yes	55%	55%	73%	67%
No	45%	45%	27%	33%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		.00	
n	358	278	551	411

How to use social media to send information responsibly				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Yes	61%	54%	66%	60%
No	39%	46%	34%	40%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.02		.00	
n	358	278	551	411

How to determine if a website is a good source of information				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Yes	73%	66%	81%	77%
No	27%	34%	19%	23%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	358	278	551	411

Civic Engagement

A goal of the WTP program is to prepare students to take part in their communities. Following their WTP experience, middle and high school students felt more prepared to participate. (See Table 48.) The percentage of middle school WTP students who agreed that they were ready to engage increased from 31% to 40%. In contrast, the percentage of control group middle schoolers who felt prepared to participate improved slightly from 28% to 31%. The percentage of WTP high school students who felt prepared to participate rose by 10 percentage points from 29% to 39%. A smaller 5-percentage point gain was recorded for the high school control group. All of the pretest/posttest differences were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 48
Prepared to Participate by Grade Level and Condition
English Learner Study

I feel prepared to participate in my community				
Middle School				
	WTP		Control Group	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Agree	31%	40%	28%	31%
Neither	56%	52%	60%	55%
Disagree	13%	8%	12%	14%
X^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,144		596	

I feel prepared to participate in my community.				
High School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	29%	39%	29%	34%
Neither	58%	54%	58%	53%
Disagree	13%	7%	13%	13%
X^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.02	
n	1,443		619	

Slightly more than half of WTP middle school students volunteered to help others prior to and following the intervention. (See Table 49.) A smaller percentage of middle school control group students volunteered before their traditional civics class, and the number decreased slightly on the posttest. WTP high school students showed the largest gains on this indicator, improving from 48% to 55%. There was little difference from pretest to posttest among the high school control group. The pretest/posttest differences were statistically significant for the middle school students and the WTP high schoolers.

Table 49
Volunteer by Grade Level and Condition
English Learner Study

I volunteer to help others				
Middle School				
	WTP		**Control Group**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	53%	55%	42%	39%
Neither	38%	40%	47%	46%
Disagree	9%	5%	11%	15%
X^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,139		617	

High School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	48%	55%	51%	52%
Neither	44%	39%	40%	39%
Disagree	8%	6%	9%	9%
X^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		NS	
n	1,443		595	

Following their civics classes, a higher percentage of WTP middle and high school students than control group students intended to vote if they are eligible. (See Table 50.) The largest gap between the WTP and control groups was found for middle school. Sixty percent of WTP middle school students planned on voting compared to 44% of the control group. WTP high school students (64%) were more likely to plan on voting than the control group (59%). The between-group differences for the WTP and control groups were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ for all comparisons.

Table 50
Plan on Voting in Elections (Posttest)

I plan on voting in elections if I am eligible				
	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	60%	44%	64%	59%
Neither	33%	40%	31%	31%
Disagree	7%	16%	5%	10%
X^2 Difference Sign.	.00		.00	
n	1,140	615	1,443	598

The civic engagement index combined the items measuring students' preparedness for community participation and volunteering. Students' scores were above the midpoint of the index, which ranged from 1 to 5, prior to the intervention. (See Table 51.) Middle school students' scores changed little from pretest to posttest. WTP high school students' scores increased significantly from 3.51 to 3.76, a gain of .17 points. The pretest/posttest percentage change was 7%. The modest effect size of .15 corresponded to an improvement index of +6 percentile points. The high school control group had a smaller pretest/posttest average score on this index.

Table 51
Civic Engagement by Grade Level and Condition
Difference of Means
English Learner Study

Civic Engagement				
	Middle School		**High School**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	3.65	3.41	3.51	3.57
Pretest SD	1.02	1.04	1.03	1.06
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	3.70	3.43	3.76	3.67
Posttest SD	1.07	1.11	1.03	1.07
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.05	.02	.17	.10
Sign. Difference	NS	NS	.00	.01
Percentage Change	1%	0	7%	2%
Effect Size	.05	.01	.15	.09
Improvement Index	+2	0	+6	+3
Pre/Post Correlation	.37	.33	.41	.41
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	1,144	598	1,440	619

The ANCOVA analysis revealed a small, statistically significant difference in the adjusted posttest means for the middle school students of .16 points. (See Table 52.) The small effect size of .15 corresponded to an improvement index of +6 percentile points. The adjusted posttest mean difference for the high school students was not statistically significant.

Table 52
ANCOVA Analysis of Civic Engagement
English Learner Study

Middle School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	3.65	.03	3.70	.03	3.67	.03	1,144
Control	3.41	.04	3.43	.05	3.51	.04	598

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size Hedge's g	Improvement Index
.16	.05	.01	4%	.15	+6

High School							
	Pretest		Posttest (Unadjusted)		Posttest (Adjusted)		n
	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	Mean	SE Mean	
WTP	3.51	.02	3.76	.02	3.76	.03	1,440
Control	3.57	.04	3.67	.04	3.67	.04	619

Adj. $\bar{\chi}$ Group Diff.	SE Difference	Sig. Difference	Percentage Difference	Effect Size	Improvement Index
.09	.05	NS	2%	.08	+3

NATIVE-LEVEL ENGLISH AND ENGLISH LEARNER ANALYSIS

The foregoing analysis examined civic knowledge in classes where 35% or more of the students were ELs. In Year 2, data on individual students' language use at home and school were collected. (See Table 53.) According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 22% of people age five and older speak a language other than English at home. Sixty-one percent of people who spoke a language other than English spoke Spanish (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025). Overall, 64% of students in the study reported that English was their heritage language. The pattern was similar for the middle and high school WTP and control groups. A slightly higher percentage of students indicated that English was the language spoken at home than reported that English was their heritage language. The percentage was slightly lower for the high school control group. After English, Spanish was the language spoken at home most often which is consistent with the national trend. Around 60% of students only spoke English at school while nearly 38% spoke English and a heritage language. A very small percentage spoke only a heritage language at school. Students who spoke English and a heritage language at school were combined with students who only spoke a language other than English. They formed a single category of English learners. Sixty-two percent of students in the research were classified as NLEs and 38% as ELs.

Table 53
Students' Language
(Year 2)

	Middle School		High School	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
English Heritage Language	65%	66%	64%	62%
Language Spoken at Home				
English	68%	68%	69%	62%
Spanish	27%	25%	24%	35%
Another Language	5%	7%	7%	3%
Language Spoken at School				
English Only	61%	62%	62%	59%
English and Heritage Language	38%	37%	36%	38%
Heritage Language Only	1%	1%	2%	3%

Civic Knowledge

Students in all conditions showed significant improvement in their knowledge of American history and government. (See Table 54.) The knowledge gains were notably greater for the WTP students than the middle and high school control groups. The increase in knowledge scores was somewhat greater for NLEs than ELs in middle school. The pretest/posttest mean difference for WTP NLE students in middle school was 4.82 points compared to 3.85 points for ELs. NLEs had a 74% increase in knowledge compared to 54% for ELs. The effect sizes were large for both groups. The improvement index was +36 percentile points for NLEs and +32 for ELs in middle school. The average difference in knowledge scores for the middle school control group was 2.46 for NLEs and 2.22 for ELs. Control group middle school students who only spoke English in school had a 35% improvement in knowledge compared to 31% for ELs. The control group's effect sizes of .45 for NLEs and .35 for ELs were markedly smaller than for the WTP students. The improvement indexes for the control group middle schoolers were +14 for NLEs and +15 for ELs. The knowledge gains were statistically significant for all middle school groups at $p \leq .01$.

Table 54
Middle School Students' Civic Knowledge
Difference of Means
Native-Level English/English Learners (Year 2)

Middle School				
	WTP		Control	
	Native-Level	English Learner	Native-Level	English Learner
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	6.48	7.13	7.06	7.26
Pretest SD	3.75	3.80	4.34	4.15
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	11.30	10.98	9.53	9.49
Posttest SD	5.02	4.60	4.70	5.57
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	4.82	3.85	2.46	2.22
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	.00
Percentage Change	74%	54%	35%	31%
Effect Size	1.10	.92	.35	.39
Improvement Index	+36	+32	+14	+15
Pre/Post Correlation	.54	.52	.45	.35
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	213	166	183	131

The findings for WTP high school students were the inverse of the WTP middle school results. (See Table 55.) ELs made greater knowledge gains than NLEs. WTP ELs average civic knowledge score increased by 4.73 points from pretest to posttest compared to 3.91 points for NLEs. The pretest/posttest percentage change was 48% for ELs and 34% for NLEs. The large effect size for ELs of .77 translated to an improvement index of +28 percentile points. The effect size of .63 for NLEs was moderate, and the improvement index was +24 percentile points. High

school control group students in both language groups had smaller knowledge gains than the WTP students. The mean pretest/posttest difference for the NLEs in the high school control group was 2.65 compared to 1.97 for ELs. The percentage gain in knowledge for NLEs was 28%, with a moderate effect size of .54 and an improvement index of +20 percentile points. The knowledge scores of ELs in the control group increased by 20%, the effect size was .40, and the improvement index was +16. All pretest/posttest mean differences were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 55
High School Students' Civic Knowledge
Difference of Means
Native-Level English/English Learners (Year 2)

High School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Native-Level	**English Learner**	**Native-Level**	**English Learner**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	11.59	9.96	9.40	10.06
Pretest SD	5.55	5.64	4.87	4.63
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	15.51	14.69	12.05	12.03
Posttest SD	6.08	6.27	5.62	5.46
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	3.91	4.73	2.65	1.97
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	.00
Percentage Change	34%	48%	28%	20%
Effect Size	.63	.77	.54	.40
Improvement Index	+24	+28	+20	+16
Pre/Post Correlation	.43	.47	.58	.55
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	393	184	224	199

Understanding of Core Civics Constructs

Prior to their civics classes, students generally believed that it is important to know how American government works. Middle school NLEs and ELs in the WTP condition were more inclined to support this premise than the control group. (See Table 56.) Sixty-seven percent of NLEs agreed that knowing how government functions is important compared to 52% in the control group. Fifty-four percent of ELs in the WTP group agreed compared to 41% of ELs in the control group.

Table 56
Importance of How Government Works
Native-Level English/English Learners (Pretest)

It is important to know how American government works.				
Middle School Pretest				
	Native-Level		English Learner	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	67%	52%	54%	41%
Neither	27%	39%	37%	50%
Disagree	6%	9%	9%	9%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.01		.05	
n	357	185	203	189

A significantly higher percentage of WTP NLE and EL middle school students indicated that they understood more about American government after their class than their counterparts in the control group. (See Table 57.) Sixty-seven percent of WTP NLEs understood more about government compared to 54% of the control group. A similar gap was found for ELs, as 61% of WTP students understood versus 51% of the control group students. The differences between the WTP and control groups were statistically significant for both NLEs and ELs.

Table 57
Understand More About American Government
Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

I understand more about American government because of this class.				
Middle School Posttest				
	Native-Level		English Learner	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	67%	54%	61%	51%
Neither	25%	36%	34%	36%
Disagree	8%	10%	5%	13%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.03		.03	
n	357	185	203	189

NLEs were more likely than ELs to believe it is important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States pre-intervention. (See Table 58.) There was a 22-percentage point difference between WTP NLEs (72%) and the control group NLEs (50%) who agreed with the need to understand American history. The gap was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. About half of the ELs in both groups indicated that understanding history and events was important. There was no meaningful difference between the groups.

Table 58
Importance of Understanding American History
Native-Level English/English Learners (Pretest)

It is important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States.				
Middle School Pretest				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	72%	50%	50%	52%
Neither	21%	43%	42%	37%
Disagree	7%	7%	8%	11%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		NS	
n	357	185	203	189

A notably higher percentage of middle school NLEs and ELs who were taught WTP indicated that they understood more about historical events after their class than students in the control group. (See Table 59.) Sixty-nine percent of WTP middle school NLEs reported learning more about historical events compared to 55% of the control group, representing a 14-percentage point disparity. Among ELs, 61% of WTP students understood more about historical events compared to half of the control group. The differences between the WTP and control group NLEs and ELs were statistically significant.

Table 59
Understand More About Historical Events
Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

I understand more about the historical events that shape the United States because I took this class.				
Middle School Posttest				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	69%	55%	61%	50%
Neither	26%	34%	34%	36%
Disagree	5%	11%	5%	14%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.02		.02	
n	357	185	203	189

The pattern for middle school students having a better sense of their rights and responsibilities as citizens was similar to the findings for understanding more about historical events. A higher percentage of WTP NLE and EL students indicated that they learned more about their rights and responsibilities than those in the control condition. (See Table 60.) Sixty-seven percent of WTP NLEs had a better sense of their rights compared to 52% of the control group. ELs (62%) had a greater sense of their citizen rights and responsibilities after their WTP class

than ELs who took a standard civics class (50%). The differences between the WTP and control groups were statistically significant for both NLEs and ELs.

Table 60
Better Sense of Citizen Rights and Responsibilities
Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

I have a better sense of my rights and responsibilities as a citizen because of this class.				
Middle School Posttest				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	67%	52%	62%	50%
Neither	25%	39%	33%	42%
Disagree	8%	9%	5%	8%
X^2 Difference Sign.	.01		.02	
n	357	185	203	189

There were no statistically significant differences for the relationship between NLEs and ELs on the measures of understanding how government works, understanding American history and the events that shaped the country, and citizen rights and responsibilities for high school students. (See Tables 61-65.)

Table 61
Importance of How Government Works
Native-Level English/English Learners (Pretest)

It is important to know how American government works.				
High School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	75%	73%	69%	68%
Neither	21%	23%	28%	28%
Disagree	4%	4%	3%	4%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		NS	
n	383	211	203	189

Table 62
Understand More About American Government
Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

I understand more about American government because of this class.				
High School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	70%	69%	75%	68%
Neither	27%	24%	22%	25%
Disagree	3%	7%	3%	7%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		NS	
n	383	211	203	189

Table 63
Importance of Understanding American History
Native-Level English/English Learners (Pretest)

It is important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States.				
High School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	68%	67%	65%	71%
Neither	27%	29%	28%	26%
Disagree	5%	4%	7%	3%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		NS	
n	383	211	203	189

Table 64
Understand More About Historical Events
Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

I understand more about the historical events that shape the United States because I took this class.				
High School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	70%	69%	72%	72%
Neither	27%	24%	24%	24%
Disagree	3%	7%	4%	4%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		NS	
n	383	211	203	189

Table 65
Better Sense of Citizen Rights and Responsibilities
Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

I have a better sense of my rights and responsibilities as a citizen because of this class.				
High School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	74%	66%	71%	71%
Neither	24%	27%	28%	24%
Disagree	2%	7%	1%	5%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		NS	
n	383	211	203	189

Civic Attentiveness

NLEs and ELs who were taught the WTP curriculum exhibited statistically significant increases in their scores on the civic attentiveness index of roughly the same magnitude. (See Table 66.) The average score for the NLE and EL WTP students rose by 6%, and the improvement index was +5 percentile points. The scores for the NLEs and ELs in the control group did not change significantly from pretest to posttest.

Table 66
Middle School Students' Civic Attentiveness
Difference of Means
Native-Level English/English Learners (Year 2)

Middle School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Native-Level	**English Learner**	**Native-Level**	**English Learner**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	4.75	4.33	4.78	4.77
Pretest SD	1.84	1.64	1.77	1.75
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	5.04	4.59	4.98	4.96
Posttest SD	1.72	1.89	1.81	1.72
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.29	.25	.21	.19
Sign. Difference	.00	.05	NS	NS
Percentage Change	6%	6%	4%	4%
Effect Size	.14	.13	.10	.12
Improvement Index	+5	+5	+4	+4
Pre/Post Correlation	.35	.43	.43	.56
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	379	186	224	189

The average scores on the civic attentiveness index of the NLE and EL high school students who were taught WTP improved significantly from pretest to posttest. (See Table 67.) The increases were slightly greater for NLEs. ELs in the control group had the greatest gains on the civic attentiveness index. Their scores rose by 9%, the effect size of the pretest/posttest mean difference was .28, and the improvement index was +11. The positive change on this index for control group NLEs was modest.

Table 67
High School Students' Civic Attentiveness
Difference of Means
Native-Level English/English Learners (Year 2)

High School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Native-Level	**English Learner**	**Native-Level**	**English Learner**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	5.04	5.07	4.87	4.75
Pretest SD	1.83	1.69	1.88	1.68
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	5.36	5.32	5.08	5.21
Posttest SD	1.93	1.80	2.00	1.78
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.32	.24	.21	.45
Sign. Difference	.00	.04	.03	.00
Percentage Change	6%	5%	4%	9%
Effect Size	.17	.14	.13	.28
Improvement Index	+6	+5	+5	+11
Pre/Post Correlation	.48	.48	.66	.57
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	357	185	203	189

Interest in Government and Public Affairs

Middle school NLE and EL WTP students' interest in government and public affairs increased more than their counterparts in the control group post-intervention. (See Table 68.) Thirty-six percent of WTP NLE's indicated that they became more interested compared to 22% of the control group students. Of ELs, 29% of WTP and 16% of control group students were more interested. A higher percentage of students in the NLE (18%) and EL (21%) control groups became less interested in government and public affairs following their standard civics class. The differences between the WTP and control group students were statistically significant for NLEs and ELs.

Table 68
Interest in Government and Public Affairs
Native-Level English/English Learners

Since taking this class, are you more or less interested in government and public affairs?				
Middle School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
More Interested	36%	22%	29%	16%
About the Same	53%	59%	61%	65%
Less Interested	11%	18%	10%	21%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.01		.05	
n	379	186	224	189

WTP high school NLEs were significantly more likely to become more interested in government and public affairs than the control group. Forty-two percent of WTP NLEs were more interested after their class compared to 33% of the control group. The percentage of ELs who became more interested in government post-program was higher than for NLEs at 44%. There was no difference between WTP ELs and the control group. (See Table 69.)

Table 69
Interest in Government and Public Affairs
Native-Level English/English Learners

Since taking this class, are you more or less interested in government and public affairs?				
High School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
More Interested	42%	33%	44%	44%
About the Same	53%	53%	49%	51%
Less Interested	5%	14%	6%	5%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.01		NS	
n	357	185	203	187

WTP middle school NLEs and ELs were more likely to feel that it is very important to keep informed about community affairs than their counterparts in the control group post-program. (See Table 70.) Thirty-four percent of WTP NLEs felt that it was very important to keep informed compared to 27% in the control group. The difference between the ELs in the WTP (25%) and control (21%) group middle school students was smaller. The between-group differences were not statistically significant for either comparison.

Table 70
Importance of Keeping Informed
Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

How important is it for you to keep informed about what is going on in your community?				
Middle School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Very Important	34%	27%	25%	21%
Somewhat Important	55%	57%	59%	59%
Not Very Important	11%	15%	16%	20%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	NS		NS	
n	379	186	224	189

Slightly over 40% of WTP NLEs and ELs in high school believed it was very important to keep informed about what is going on in their community post-intervention. (See Table 71.) This percentage was significantly higher than for the control group (31%). There was no difference between the EL WTP and control group students on this indicator.

Table 71
Importance of Keeping Informed
Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

How important is it for you to keep informed about what is going on in your community?				
High School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Very Important	42%	31%	41%	40%
Somewhat Important	51%	55%	54%	55%
Not Very Important	7%	14%	5%	5%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.05		NS	
n	357	185	203	187

Political Efficacy

The internal political efficacy—the belief that they have a say in what government does—increased significantly for all middle and high school learners who took a We the People class. (See Table 72.) The percentage of middle school NLEs who felt they could influence government rose from 20% to 34%. WTP ELs experienced an 11-percentage point increase from 14% to 25%. The pretest/posttest gains were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ for both WTP groups. The political efficacy of the middle school NLE control group increased while there was

no change for the EL control group. The relationship was not statistically significant for either the NLE or the EL control group students.

Table 72
Pretest/Posttest Political Efficacy by Middle School and Condition
Native-Level English/English Learners

I have a say in what government does.				
Middle School Native-Level English				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	20%	34%	19%	26%
Neither	46%	44%	51%	47%
Disagree	34%	22%	30%	27%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.01		NS	
n	377		182	
Middle School English Learner				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	14%	25%	24%	25%
Neither	53%	53%	55%	48%
Disagree	33%	22%	21%	27%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		NS	
n	220		190	

The internal political efficacy of high school WTP NLEs increased significantly from 20% to 36%, a 16-percentage point gain. (See Table 73.) The percentage of WTP ELs who felt that they had a say in what government does also improved by 16-percentage points, from 26% pre-intervention to 42% post-program. The political efficacy of the control group increased, but the gains were smaller than for the WTP students. All of the pretest/posttest differences were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 73
Pretest/Posttest Political Efficacy by High School and Condition
Native-Level English/English Learners

I have a say in what government does.				
High School Native-Level English				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	20%	36%	24%	31%
Neither	56%	48%	49%	40%
Disagree	24%	16%	27%	29%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.01		.01	
n	355		182	
High School English Learner				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	26%	42%	17%	33%
Neither	52%	42%	56%	51%
Disagree	22%	16%	27%	16%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	207		187	

Communication and Civil Discourse Skills

The communication and civil discourse skills of middle school WTP NLEs and ELs improved significantly from pretest to posttest. (See Table 74.) The gains were greater for ELs than NLEs. Average scores on the communication index for WTP ELs increased by 16% compared to 10% for NLEs. The effect size for WTP ELs was .38 and corresponded to an improvement index of +15 percentile points. For WTP NLEs, the effect size was .30 and the improvement index was +11. In contrast, the gains in communication and civil discourse were more modest for the control group. The pretest/posttest percentage change was 8% for NLEs and 3% for ELs. The pretest/posttest mean differences were statistically significant for both WTP groups and for control group NLEs.

Table 74
Middle School Students' Communication and Civil Discourse Skills
Native-Level English/English Learners
Difference of Means

Middle School				
	WTP		Control	
	Native-Level	English Learner	Native-Level	English Learner
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	8.20	7.28	8.11	7.38
Pretest SD	2.48	2.69	2.55	1.99
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	8.99	8.41	8.77	7.61
Posttest SD	2.55	2.24	2.70	2.37
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.79	1.12	.66	.22
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	NS
Percentage Change	10%	16%	8%	3%
Effect Size	.30	.38	.24	.10
Improvement Index	+11	+15	+6	+4
Pre/Post Correlation	.46	.28	.48	.45
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	379	186	224	189

ELs who were taught the WTP curriculum had the greatest gains in communication and civil discourse skills. (See Table 75.) Their average score on the index increased by 16% from pre- to post-intervention compared to ELs in the control group, whose scores rose by 9%. The scores of the NLEs in both the WTP and control group increased by 15%. The effect size for high school ELs who experienced WTP was .40 and the improvement index was +16 percentile points. In contrast, the effect size for ELs in the control group was .27 with an improvement index score of +10. For all NLEs, the effect size was .35, which corresponded to an improvement index score of +14. All the pretest/posttest mean differences on the index were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$

Table 75
High School Students' Communication and Civil Discourse Skills
Native-Level English/English Learners
Difference of Means

High School				
	WTP		Control	
	Native-Level	English Learner	Native-Level	English Learner
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	8.34	7.43	8.34	7.89
Pretest SD	2.51	2.26	2.59	2.01
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	9.29	8.62	9.30	8.63

Posttest SD	2.66	2.87	2.80	2.74
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.95	1.18	.96	.74
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	.00
Percentage Change	11%	16%	11%	9%
Effect Size	.35	.40	.35	.27
Improvement Index	+14	+16	+14	+10
Pre/Post Correlation	.46	.36	.48	.43
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	357	185	203	187

Teamwork and Collaboration Skills

Middle school WTP and control group NLEs scores on the teamwork and collaboration skills index improved significantly. (See Table 76.) The percentage change from pretest to posttest for both conditions was 11%. The effect sizes were nearly the same at .33 for the WTP and .35 for the control group. The improvement indexes were +13 and +14 respectively. The control group ELs made greater gains on the teamwork and collaboration index than the WTP ELs. In both instances, the pretest/posttest increase in scores was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$.

Table 76
Middle School Students' Teamwork and Collaboration Skills
Native-Level English/English Learners
Difference of Means

Middle School				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Native-Level	**English Learner**	**Native-Level**	**English Learner**
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	6.14	5.67	6.09	5.64
Pretest SD	1.77	1.67	1.77	1.68
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	6.79	6.05	6.77	6.23
Posttest SD	1.75	1.88	1.78	1.76
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.65	.38	.67	.59
Sign. Difference	.00	.05	.00	.00
Percentage Change	11%	7%	11%	10%
Effect Size	.33	.19	.35	.35
Improvement Index	+13	+8	+14	+14
Pre/Post Correlation	.38	.36	.43	.56
Sign. Correlation	.02	.00	.00	.00
n	379	186	224	189

WTP high school ELs' teamwork and collaboration skills improved more than their NLE counterparts. (See Table 77.) The pretest/posttest mean score of WTP ELs on the index improved by 14% compared to 12% for NLEs. The effect size for ELs of .37 corresponded to an improvement index of +14 percentile points, which was higher than the effect size of .23 and improvement index of +9 percentile points for NLEs. ELs in the control group also made greater gains on the teamwork and collaboration skills index than NLEs. Control group ELs' mean score increased by 17% compared to 9% for NLEs. All of the pretest/posttest mean differences were statistically significant at p≤.01.

Table 77
High School Students' Teamwork and Collaboration Skills
Native-Level English/English Learners
Difference of Means

High School				
	WTP		Control	
	Native-Level	English Learner	Native-Level	English Learner
Pretest $\bar{\chi}$	6.03	5.81	6.18	5.76
Pretest SD	1.77	1.79	1.86	1.94
Posttest $\bar{\chi}$	6.74	6.61	6.74	6.73
Posttest SD	1.74	2.12	1.83	2.05
$\bar{\chi}$ Difference	.71	.80	.55	.97
Sign. Difference	.00	.00	.00	.00
Percentage Change	12%	14%	9%	17%
Effect Size	.23	.37	.26	.36
Improvement Index	+9	+14	+10	+14
Pre/Post Correlation	.35	.40	.35	.29
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	NS
n	357	185	203	187

Civic Engagement

Middle school NLEs in both the WTP and control groups felt more prepared to engage in their community after their civics classes. (See Table 78.) The pretest and posttest percentages were similar for both groups. The within-group differences were statistically significant at p≤.01 for both WTP and the control group. ELs who were taught WTP felt more prepared to participate than ELs in the control group post-intervention. Twenty-five percent of WTP ELs felt prepared to engage pre-program compared to 34% after their class, a change of 9 percentage points. The percentage of students in the control group who felt prepared to participate remained consistent at 27%.

Table 78
Prepared to Participate by Middle School and Condition
Native-Level English/English Learners

I feel prepared to participate in my community				
Middle School Native-Level English				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	34%	40%	32%	39%
Neither	54%	50%	56%	49%
Disagree	12%	10%	12%	12%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	379		186	
Middle School English Learner				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	25%	34%	27%	27%
Neither	57%	57%	63%	59%
Disagree	18%	9%	10%	14%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		NS	
n	222		197	

High school NLEs in the WTP and control group felt more prepared to participate in their community post-intervention. The magnitude of the increase—7 percentage points—was similar across conditions. The increase in the percentage of ELs in the control group who indicated that they were more prepared to engage after their civics class was greater than for WTP ELs. All of the pre/post intervention differences were statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. (See Table 79.)

Table 79
Prepared to Participate by High School and Condition
Native-Level English/English Learners

I feel prepared to participate in my community.				
High School Native-Level English				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	34%	41%	32%	39%
Neither	54%	51%	56%	49%
Disagree	12%	8%	12%	11%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	359		190	

I feel prepared to participate in my community.				
High School English Learner				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	20%	28%	18%	34%
Neither	63%	60%	64%	51%
Disagree	17%	12%	18%	15%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	207		189	

The percentages of middle school students in all categories agreeing with the statement, "I volunteer to help others," remained nearly identical before and after the interventions. (See Table 80.) A little more than half of middle school NLEs volunteered. The percentage of ELs who volunteered was somewhat lower.

Table 80
Volunteer by Middle School and Condition
Native-Level English/English Learners

I volunteer to help others.				
Middle School Native-Level English				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	54%	54%	54%	55%
Neither	38%	37%	37%	36%
Disagree	8%	9%	9%	9%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	NS		NS	
n	379		186	
Middle School English Learner				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	42%	40%	47%	44%
Neither	48%	52%	43%	46%
Disagree	10%	8%	10%	10%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	NS		NS	
n	222		197	

A significantly higher percentage of WTP NLEs in high school indicated that they volunteered to help others post-intervention. (See Table 81.) Fifty-one percent of NLEs volunteered pre-WTP compared to 59% on the posttest. The difference was statistically significant at $p \leq .01$. The high school NLE control group showed little change.

Table 81
Volunteer by High School and Condition
Native-Level English/English Learners

I volunteer to help others.				
High School Native-Level English				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	51%	59%	54%	55%
Neither	41%	36%	37%	36%
Disagree	7%	5%	9%	9%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		NS	
n	359		190	
High School English Learner				
	WTP		**Control**	
	Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
Agree	50%	59%	48%	60%
Neither	41%	35%	43%	30%
Disagree	9%	6%	9%	10%
χ^2 Pre/Post Diff. Sign.	.00		.00	
n	206		186	

WTP NLEs and ELs in middle school were more inclined to vote if they became eligible than their control group counterparts. (See Table 82.) Fifty-five percent of WTP NLEs planned on voting versus 49% of the control group. WTP ELs (43%) were more inclined to vote than control group students (37%). The differences between the WTP and control group students were statistically significant for both NLEs and ELs.

Table 82
Plan on Voting in Elections
Middle School Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

I plan on voting in elections if I am eligible.				
Middle School				
	Native-Level		**English Learner**	
	WTP	**Control**	**WTP**	**Control**
Agree	55%	49%	43%	37%
Neither	32%	37%	38%	55%
Disagree	13%	13%	19%	8%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.00		.05	
n	379	186	224	189

Close to 60% of WTP NLEs planned on voting compared to 56% of the control group. While small, the difference is statistically significant. Around 40% of high school ELs planned on voting, and there is no meaningful difference between the WTP and control groups. (See Table 83.)

Table 83
Plan on Voting in Elections
High School Native-Level English/English Learners (Posttest)

I plan on voting in elections if I am eligible.				
High School				
	Native-Level		English Learner	
	WTP	Control	WTP	Control
Agree	59%	56%	42%	41%
Neither	33%	32%	44%	41%
Disagree	8%	12%	14%	18%
χ^2 Difference Sign.	.05		NS	
n	357	185	203	187

TEACHER STUDY
Measures

Civic Knowledge

Teacher's civic knowledge was measured by an index of 50 multiple-choice questions about civics content, American history, and the public policy process. These questions are relevant to the WTP curriculum but were not overly aligned with the intervention or the WTP curriculum. The knowledge items were measures with known reliability and validity that has been demonstrated in other studies (Owen, 2024). The multiple-choice items had four answer options and an "I don't know" category. One point was awarded for a correct answer, and no points were given for an incorrect or "I don't know" response. The reliability of the index was strong for both the pretest and posttest. (See Table 84.)

Table 84
Teacher Civic Knowledge Index Range and Reliability
(Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
All Teachers	0-50	.86	.84
Students with Disabilities	0-50	.85	.82
English Learners	0-50	.88	.84

Confidence Instructing Civics

The JMLPE was designed to provide teachers with professional learning and resources to strengthen their confidence in fostering civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their classrooms. The civics classroom plays a central role in developing students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Civic knowledge equips students with an understanding of democratic principles, institutions, and processes, helping them understand how the system functions and clarifying their rights and responsibilities within it (Galston, 2004; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996). Civic skills enable students to apply that knowledge through critical thinking, deliberation, collaboration, and effective communication in civic contexts (Branson and Quigley, 1998; Van Camp and Baugh, 2016). Civic dispositions encompass the attitudes and commitments, such as respect for others, tolerance, responsibility, and concern for the common good, that sustain a healthy democracy (Crittenden and Levine, 2018). Together, these components shape an individual's civic identity and capacity for democratic participation and must be intentionally cultivated through instruction.

Teachers were asked on the pretest and posttest how confident they were in teaching (1) civic knowledge, (2) civic skills, and (3) civic dispositions with answer options including (1) not very confident, (2) somewhat confident, and (3) very confident. An additive index that combined the three items was created to measure confidence in instructing civics. The index range was from 1-7 and the reliability was strong for both pretest and posttest. (See Table 85.)

Table 85
Confidence Instructing Civics Index Range and Reliability
(Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
All Teachers	1-7	.81	.83
Students with Disabilities	1-7	.84	.85
English Learners	1-7	.81	.80

Civic education prepares students for civic engagement by building competencies that promote cooperation, teamwork, and civility. These skills are valuable for civic engagement as citizens must consider others and work collaboratively to solve problems. The concepts of social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and self-efficacy are related to civics concepts highlighted throughout the WTP curriculum. An additive index was created to measure teacher confidence in instructing civics-relevant core competencies. Teachers were asked how confident they felt teaching (1) social awareness, (2) self-management, (3) relationship skills, and (4) self-efficacy. The questions were on a scale of (1) not very confident, (2) somewhat confident, and (3) very confident. The index ranged from 1-9 and the reliability was strong for both pretest and posttest. (See Table 86.)

Table 86
Confidence Instructing Core Competencies Index Range and Reliability (Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
All Teachers	1-9	.83	.83
Students with Disabilities	1-9	.87	.83
English Learners	1-9	.81	.82

Teacher Pedagogy

The JMLPE PL and curricular resources provided tools for teachers to enhance their instructional pedagogy. Some of the lessons designed for the WTP curriculum move away from teacher-centered learning and embrace student-centered approaches. To assess whether the intervention impacted instructional approaches, teachers were asked about the pedagogies and activities they use in the classroom. JMLPE and control group teachers used a wide variety of instructional approaches in their classes. Many of the lesson plans included in the WTP curriculum provide hands-on activities for student-led learning, allowing teachers to rely less on explicit instruction such as lectures. Many of these pedagogies and activities allow students to practice civic skills in the process. Students can work with others, analyze media, listen to different viewpoints, and develop arguments. The teacher study examines pedagogy use, project-based instruction, and classroom activities.

Pedagogy Use

Teachers were asked how frequently they use a variety of established pedagogies in their instruction. These included: (1) lecture, (2) Socratic method, (3) reading out loud, (4) class discussion, (5) group discussion, (6) library research, (7) internet research, (8) work with primary documents, (9) flipped classroom, (10) guest speakers, (11) essay writing, (12) Kagan method, and (13) notebooks or journals. Answer options included: (1) never, (2) a few times a semester, (3) weekly, and (4) daily.

Project-based Instruction

Project-based learning provides students with an opportunity to actively explore and apply civic content. Students use their critical thinking skills to solve a problem or answer a complex question (Buck Institute for Education, 2024). Working with their peers gives students valuable experience that can build teamwork, collaboration, empathy, and other civic competencies (Almulla, 2020). To measure the use of projects in instruction, teachers were asked (yes/no) whether they include different types of projects in their class. These included (1) individual projects, (2) group projects, (3) class projects, (4) digital projects, and (5) portfolio projects.

Classroom Activities

The JMLPE PL program and the WTP curriculum encourage teachers to use a variety of learning activities in their civics instruction. Many of these activities allow students to practice civic skills. The simulated congressional hearings serve this purpose. Students working in a group, research civics questions, prepare an argument, and answer questions from a panel of judges. Beyond the civic knowledge required for the hearings, students also practice civic skills. The classroom activities asked in this study include (1) mock election, (2) moot court, (3) debates, (4) plays or skits, (5) simulated hearings, (6) conduct surveys, (7) student speeches, (8) take part in a civics competition, (9) write and/or circulate a petition, (10) write letters to government officials, (11) create civics materials, newsletters, videos, or websites, (12) take field trips to government or historic sites, (13) meet with government officials or community leaders, (14) draft legislation, and (15) use STEM skills. The answer options were yes or no.

Emphasis on Core Civics Topics

Teachers were asked how much emphasis they placed on topics that are central to a quality civics curriculum. The JMLPE PL program was designed not only to strengthen teachers' instructional strategies, but also to encourage sustained attention to foundational civic content and practices. Emphasizing these topics is critical because the civics curriculum centers on constitutional principles, democratic institutions, and informed civic participation. Increases in emphasis suggest that teachers are integrating these core components more intentionally into their classroom instruction. Teachers were asked how much emphasis they placed on ten topics: (1) educating students about core democratic principles as set forth in the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution, (2) educating students about government and how it works, (3) teaching students about current events, (4) teaching students about the economic system, (5) preparing students to take an active role in community affairs, (6) preparing students to follow government and politics through media, (7) integrating STEM skills into the civics, social studies, and/or history curriculum, (8) developing an understanding of different cultures, (9) encouraging students to be aware of social conditions, and (10) educating students about the relationship of the United States to other nations and world affairs. The variables were coded: (1) not at all, (2) very little, (3) somewhat, (4) a great deal. The index had a range of 1-31 and the reliability is strong for both pretest and posttest. The ten items were combined to form an additive core civics topics index. The index ranged from 1 to 31, and the reliability was strong. (See Table 87.)

Table 87
Core Civic Topics Index Range and Reliability
(Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
All Teachers	1-31	.85	.83
Students with Disabilities	1-31	.89	.87
English Learners	1-31	.90	.85

Media Literacy Instruction

Media literacy is a major concern for teachers (Owen, 2026). In our rapidly changing media environment, students need to be able to find and evaluate media. These skills are valuable in the WTP curriculum as students are asked to research and apply constitutional lessons to contemporary moments. Other studies of the Center's PL programs and curricula have found that increased media literacy emphasis is correlated with increases in students' media literacy knowledge (Owen, McSweeney, and Rader 2026).

Teachers were asked how often they taught five media literacy skills: (1) teach students to be critical consumers of news, (2) access online news sites, (3) hold discussions where students consider issues from a variety of perspectives, (4) instruct students in the use of government websites and other e-government resources, and (5) have students use websites with information on historical documents, objects, and events. The response categories were: (1) rarely or never, (2) sometimes, and (3) frequently. An additive index was created to measure frequency of instruction of media literacy topics. The index ranged from 1-11 and the reliability was adequate for all conditions. (See Table 88.)

Table 88
Media Literacy Instruction Index Range and Reliability
(Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
All Teachers	1-11	.75	.79
Students with Disabilities	1-11	.79	.83
English Learners	1-11	.76	.75

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teachers were asked how much they felt they could do to manage their classrooms effectively and to develop students' civic competencies. These measures capture two related but distinct dimensions of teacher efficacy. Teachers' self-efficacy measures their confidence in reaching all students, maintaining productive learning environments, and addressing barriers to learning, including disengagement, disruptive behavior, limited home support, and adverse community conditions. Strong classroom management is foundational to effective instruction, particularly in settings serving diverse learners. Civic skills efficacy captures teachers' confidence in facilitating the core practices of civic education, such as promoting critical thinking, fostering collaboration, guiding civil discussions on difficult topics, addressing sensitive issues, and encouraging respect for diverse viewpoints. Teacher efficacy in these areas is essential because civic learning depends not only on content knowledge, but also on the ability to create classroom environments where students can engage thoughtfully, respectfully, and collaboratively with complex public issues.

Classroom Management Efficacy

The classroom management efficacy index measures efficacy with classroom management and reaching all students and includes: (1) to get through to the most difficult students, (2) to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork, (3) to overcome the influence of adverse community conditions on students' learning, (4) to promote learning when there is a lack of support from the home, (5) to find resources for working with students who have unique learning needs, (6) to keep students on task on difficult assignments, (7) to control disruptive behavior in the classroom, (8) to implement active learning strategies in your classroom, and (9) to increase students' memory of what they have been taught in previous lessons. The index ranges from 1-19 and the reliability was strong for both pretest and posttest. (See Table 89.)

Table 89
Classroom Management Efficacy Index Range and Reliability
(Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
All Teachers	1-19	.85	.83
Students with Disabilities	1-19	.87	.85
English Learners	1-19	.86	.86

Civic Skills Efficacy

Six items capture the extent to which teachers feel they are able to prepare students for civic engagement. Teacher were asked how much they are able to: (1) to help your students think critically, (2) to get students to work together, (3) to respond to difficult questions from your students, (4) to hold civil discussions on difficult topics, (5) to use strategies for addressing sensitive issues, and (6) to get students to be respectful of the opinions of others. Answer options were coded: (1) very little, (2) some, and (3) a great deal. An additive civic skills efficacy index was creative from these items. This index ranged from 1-13 and the reliability was strong for both pretest and posttest. (See Table 90.)

Table 90
Civic Skills Efficacy Index Range and Reliability
(Cronbach's α)

	Range	Pretest	Posttest
All Teachers	1-13	.77	.79
Students with Disabilities	1-13	.83	.81
English Learners	1-13	.83	.84

JMLPE Program Evaluation

JMLPE teachers were asked to evaluate the PL program and the We the People curricular resources they were provided. Teachers were asked how effective the JMLPE was for (1) increasing your content knowledge, (2) enhancing your teaching and pedagogy skills, (3) preparing you to instruct the We the People curriculum, (4) preparing your students for civic life, (5) preparing you to deal with difficult topics and discussions in the classroom, and (6) preparing you for the simulated congressional hearings. Answer options included: (1) not very effective, (2) somewhat effective, and (3) very effective. Teachers were also asked to evaluate the JMLPE resources, including: (1) the We the People textbook, (2) lesson plans, and (3) supporting materials. Answer options were: (1) poor, (2) fair, (3) good, (4) very good, and (5) excellent.

TEACHER STUDY

The impact of the JMLPE was evaluated through RCTs comparing outcomes of teachers who enrolled in the JMLPE intervention and a "business-as-usual" control group. Separate studies were conducted of teachers of SWDs and ELs. Schools whose teachers who met the program's criteria of being certified to instruct SWDs or ELs and who would be teaching a civics class in the program year were recruited by the Center's network of state coordinators and randomly assigned to the JMLPE intervention or control groups. All civics teachers in a school were invited to take part in the research. Intervention and control group teachers received a stipend. Control group teachers were offered the opportunity to take part in the Center's PL program in a subsequent year. A total of 304 teachers took part in the research and completed the requirements over the two years when the program was fully implemented. (See Table 91.)

Table 91
Sample Size
Teacher Study

	Year 1	Year 2	Total
JMLPE	73	143	216
SWD	32	46	78
EL	30	44	74
Control	33	55	88
Total	106	198	304

School Characteristics

To better understand the contexts where teachers worked, we examined the characteristics of participating schools across both the JMLPE and control groups. The profiles of the schools assigned to the JMLPE and control groups were similar. (See Table 92.) Almost all JMLPE (97%) and control group (98%) teachers taught in public schools. Overall, 35% of JMLPE

teachers taught in rural schools, 32% in in urban schools, and 34% in suburban schools. The control group had a larger proportion of rural teachers with 42% working in rural schools, 23% in urban schools, and 35% in suburban schools. Year 1 of the study included more teachers from suburban schools with 41% of JMLPE teachers and 42% of control group teachers working in these areas. In comparison, 26% of JMLPE teachers and 27% of control group teachers worked in rural schools. In Year 2 of the study, 39% of JMLPE teachers and 51% of control group teachers were from schools in rural areas.

A majority of teachers worked in schools that served high-needs students. 59% of JMLPE teachers and 61% of control group teachers taught in Title I schools. The majority of JMLPE and control group schools had a high percentage of students receiving free or reduced cost lunches. Sixty-five percent of both JMLPE and control group schools had high percentages of minority students (65%). Fifty percent of the JMLPE schools and 57% of control group schools served significant numbers of students below grade level. In total, 39% of JMLPE teachers and 36% of control teachers worked in schools with high percentages of SWDs. Schools in the study had a high percentage of ELs including 41% of JMLPE schools and 42% of control schools. Teachers also taught at schools with high percentages of homeless students, including 21% of JMLPE teachers and 23% of control group teachers. Students in control group schools were more likely to be served by rural education agencies. A small percentage of schools had large populations of disconnected/migrant students or incarcerated students.

Table 92
School Characteristics

	All Years		Year 1		Year 2	
	JMLPE	**Control**	**JMLPE**	**Control**	**JMLPE**	**Control**
Public	97%	98%	99%	97%	96%	98%
Private	3%	2%	1%	3%	4%	2%
Rural	35%	42%	26%	27%	39%	51%
Urban	32%	23%	33%	30%	31%	18%
Suburban	34%	35%	41%	42%	30%	31%
Title I	59%	61%	59%	55%	59%	66%
School serves 30% or more of more students:						
Students with Disabilities	39%	36%	44%	33%	37%	38%
English Learners	41%	42%	41%	36%	41%	46%
Free or Reduced Meals	83%	83%	82%	79%	84%	86%
Minority Students	65%	65%	69%	73%	64%	60%
Students in Poverty	66%	63%	70%	58%	64%	66%
Below Grade Level	50%	57%	51%	64%	49%	53%
Homeless or Foster Care	21%	23%	26%	27%	18%	20%
Served by Rural Agencies	12%	17%	8%	9%	13%	22%
Disconnected/migrant Youth	13%	9%	18%	6%	11%	11%
Incarcerated	4%	1%	6%	3%	3%	0%

Teacher Characteristics

The characteristics of the teachers were similar across the JMLPE and control groups for both study years. (See Table 93.) All of the JMLPE and control teachers held at least a bachelor's degree, and the majority had an advanced degree such as a master's, EdD, or PhD. Overall, 35% of JMLPE teachers' highest level of education was a bachelor's degree compared to 25% of control teachers. In Year 1, 30% of JMLPE teachers had earned a bachelor's degree compared to 27% of control teachers. Seventy percent of JMLPE teachers and 73% of control group teachers had an advanced degree. In Year 2, 53% of JMLPE teachers and 77% of control group teachers had an advanced degree.

There were more female than male teachers in the study, as 62% of JMLPE and 57% of control group teachers were female. In Year 1, 68% of JMLPE teachers were female compared to 56% of control group teachers. In Year 2, 59% of JMLPE teachers were female compared to 58% of control group teachers. The mean age was 42 for the JMLPE teachers and 41 for control group teachers. The racial and ethnic characteristics were similar in the JMLPE and control groups. The JMLPE teachers were 71% white, 17% Black, 5% multiple races, 4% Hispanic, 1% Asian, and 1% Native American or Alaskan Native. Among control group teachers 68% were white, 10% Black, 5% multiple races, 10% Hispanic, 6% Asian, and 1% Native American or Alaskan Native.

Table 93
Teacher Characteristics

	All Years		Year 1		Year 2	
	JMLPE	**Control**	**JMLPE**	**Control**	**JMLPE**	**Control**
Education						
Bachelor's Degree	35%	25%	30%	27%	38%	24%
Master's Degree/MBA	61%	73%	64%	70%	59%	75%
Doctoral/Law Degree	4%	2%	6%	3%	4%	2%
Gender						
Female	62%	57%	68%	56%	59%	58%
Male	38%	43%	32%	44%	42%	42%
Age Range (years)	21-67	22-64	21-65	22-62	22-67	23-64
Mean Age (years)	42	41	41	40	42	41
Race/Ethnicity						
White/Caucasian	71%	68%	64%	59%	74%	73%
Black/African American	17%	11%	29%	22%	11%	4%
Multiple Races	5%	6%	1%	6%	6%	6%
Hispanic/Latino	5%	10%	3%	3%	6%	14%
Asian/Asian American	1%	5%	1%	9%	1%	2%
Native American/Alaskan	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%

Teacher Experience

The educators who participated in the JMLPE research were experienced civics and social studies teachers. JMLPE teachers had taught history, civics, social studies, or American government for an average of nine years with six at their current school. The control group teachers had taught these subjects for an average of ten years with six years at their current school. The teachers who participated in this study primarily taught middle school (grades 6-8) or high school (grades 9-12). Overall, 38% of the JMLPE teachers and 42% of control group teachers taught middle school, while 57% of JMLPE and 52% of control teachers taught high school. A small number of teachers—4% of JMLPE and control group teachers—taught upper elementary school (grades 4-5).

A small percentage of teachers in both cohorts reported prior experience with the Center for Civic Education's flagship programs. (See Table 94.) Since the JMLPE's professional learning program and We the People curriculum were substantially adapted, the decision was made to include them in the research. Ten percent of JMLPE teachers and 14% of control group teachers had previously taught the We the People Curriculum, with 10% of JMLPE and control group teachers receiving WTP PL. Some teachers had experience with the Center's Project Citizen, with 9% of JMLPE teachers and 8% of control group teachers previously implementing the curriculum; 11% of JMLPE teachers and 10% of control group teachers had received Project Citizen PL. Fewer teachers, 2% of JMLPE teachers and 7% of control group teachers, participated in the original James Madison Legacy Project. Most teachers had experience with other relevant PL programs, including 51% of JMLPE teachers and 49% of control group teachers.

Over half of all JMLPE and control group teachers in this study had significant experience teaching students of color (SOC), SWDs, and ELs. In Year 1, large majorities of both JMLPE and control group teachers reported significant experience teaching diverse student populations: 81% of JMLPE and 77% of control teachers had taught SOC, 67% and 63% had instructed ELs, and 75% and 66% had taught SWDs. In Year 2, these percentages were somewhat lower but comparable across groups: 69% of JMLPE and 67% of control group teachers had experience teaching SOCs, 53% and 60% had taught ELs, and 56% and 53% had taught SWDs.

Table 94
Teacher Experience

	All Years		Year 1		Year 2	
	JMLPE	**Control**	**JMLPE**	**Control**	JMLPE	**Control**
Years Teaching						
In general (Mean years)	9	11	8	9	10	11
At Current School (Mean years)	6	7	5	5	6	8
AP-*Will the class you be teaching for this study be Advanced Placement?*	5%	3%	6%	3%	4%	4%
Grade Taught						
4th - 6th Grade	12%	10%	6%	9%	15%	11%
7th - 8th Grade	42%	47%	41%	42%	42%	49%
9th - 12th Grade	57%	54%	55%	55%	59%	47%
Experience Teaching						
We the People	10%	14%	8%	24%	11%	7%
Project Citizen	9%	8%	11%	9%	8%	7%
Professional Learning						
We the People	10%	10%	10%	9%	11%	11%
Project Citizen	11%	10%	16%	12%	8%	9%
James Madison Legacy Project	2%	7%	4%	3%	1%	9%
Other Relevant PD	51%	49%	45%	52%	54%	48%
Significant Experience Teaching						
English Learners	58%	59%	66%	61%	54%	58%
Students w/ Disabilities	62%	58%	75%	61%	55%	56%
Students of Color	73%	77%	81%	76%	69%	67%
None of the above	15%	11%	11%	3%	17%	16%

Civic Knowledge

The civic knowledge of teachers who participated in the JMLPE program increased significantly from pretest to posttest. (See Table 95.) Difference of means tests (paired sample t-tests) were performed for the JMLPE and control group samples. The mean knowledge score of JMLPE teachers increased from a baseline of 28.69 points to 31.42, a 10% increase that was statistically significant. The mean knowledge score for the control group teachers started with a baseline of 28.11 and increased to 29.16, a gain of 4% that was not statistically significant at the traditional $p \leq .05$ level. The effect size for JMLPE teachers was moderate at .39 compared to the smaller effect size of .15 for the control group. This corresponds to an improvement index of +15 for JMLPE teachers and +6 for the control group. Teachers who teach large numbers of SWD saw the largest increase in civic knowledge, starting with baseline score of 25.84 and reaching 30.23 in the posttest. This was a 17% increase from pre- to posttest with an effect size of .58 and

an improvement index of +22. English language teachers also saw significant gains with a 14% increase from 26.67 to 30.50, an effect size of .49 and improvement index of +19.

Table 95
Teacher Civic Knowledge Index
Difference of Means

	JMLPE	Control	SWD	EL
Pretest $\bar{x}$	28.69	28.11	25.84	26.67
Pretest SD	7.43	9.06	7.93	8.62
Posttest $\bar{x}$	31.42	29.16	30.23	30.50
Posttest SD	6.53	7.69	6.89	7.21
$\bar{x}$ Difference	2.73	1.06	4.39	3.83
Sign. Difference	.00	.08	.00	.00
Percentage Change	10%	4%	17%	14%
Effect Size	.39	.15	.58	.49
Improvement Index	+15	+6	+22	+19
Pre/Post Correlation	.52	.66	.49	.54
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	214	85	77	72

Confidence Instructing Civics

Teachers in the intervention and control groups were more confident imparting civic knowledge to students than skills and dispositions. (See Table 96.) At the start of JMLPE, 70% of JMLPE teachers were very confident about instructing civic knowledge, which remained consistent post-program. Control group teachers began the study with 74% feeling very confident instructing civic knowledge; the percentage indicating that they were very confident dropped to 63%. JMLPE teachers' confidence in teaching civic skills increased from 52% to 58%. In comparison, control group teachers' confidence in teaching civic skills dropped from 51% to 46%. Confidence in teaching civic dispositions had the lowest baseline, with JMLPE teachers starting at 42% and control group teachers starting at 38%. JMLPE teachers' confidence in teaching civic dispositions increased to 51%. Control group teachers' confidence decreased, with only 32% feeling very confident on the posttest.

Table 96
Civic Education Instruction Confidence
Very Confident

	JMLPE			Control		
	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig
Knowledge about American government and politics	70%	71%	NS	74%	63%	.00
Civic skills--the skills needed to be actively engaged in the community	52%	58%	.01	51%	46%	.00
Civic dispositions--a desire to become involved in civic affairs	42%	51%	.00	38%	32%	.05

Building civic skills in students can be a challenging task and throughout the program JMLPE teachers maintained high levels of confidence in their ability. JMLPE teachers' average scores on the civic education instruction confidence index increased by 3%, although this change was not statistically significant. (See Table 97.) The control group's mean index score decreased by 8%, a statistically significant decrease with an effect size of -.25 and an improvement index of –10. Scores of teachers of SWDs increased by 7%, a statistically significant increase with a small effect size of .20 and an improvement index of + 8.

Table 97
Civic Education Instruction Index
Difference of Means

	JMLPE	Control	SWD	EL
Pretest $\bar{x}$	4.56	4.48	4.54	4.33
Pretest SD	1.36	1.46	1.45	1.40
Posttest $\bar{x}$	4.69	4.14	4.86	4.52
Posttest SD	1.44	1.64	1.44	1.54
$\bar{x}$ Difference	.13	-.33	.32	.19
Sign. Difference	.12	.01	.04	.13
Percentage Change	3%	-8%	7%	4%
Effect Size	.08	-.25	.20	.13
Improvement Index	+3	-10	+8	+5
Pre/Post Correlation	.34	.64	.40	.52
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	214	84	76	73

JMLPE teachers maintained high levels of confidence in instructing core civic competencies. (See Table 98.) JMLPE teachers began with a high baseline score of 7.27 out of nine. A ceiling effect may have limited growth amongst JMLPE teachers. There is no significant

change for JMLPE teachers. The scores of teachers of SWDs and ELs also did not change significantly. The control group started with a lower baseline than the JMLPE teachers (7.17), which decreased post-program. The mean difference of -.35 is significant at the $p < 0.1$ level. Control group teachers' average score decreased by 5% with an effect size of -.16 and an improvement index of –6 percentile points.

Table 98
Confidence Instructing Core Competencies Index
Difference of Means

	JMLPE	Control	SWD	EL
Pretest $\bar{x}$	7.27	7.17	7.59	7.45
Pretest SD	1.71	1.76	1.67	1.58
Posttest $\bar{x}$	7.24	6.82	7.50	7.31
Posttest SD	1.76	1.62	1.67	1.68
$\bar{x}$ Difference	-.03	-.35	-.09	-.14
Sign. Difference	.41	.07	.33	.26
Percentage Change	--	-5%	-1%	-2%
Effect Size	-.02	-.16	-.05	-.08
Improvement Index	-1	-6	-2	-3
Pre/Post Correlation	.41	.24	.43	.39
Sign. Correlation	.00	.02	.00	.00
n	213	84	76	71

Teacher Pedagogy

Pedagogy Use

Teachers incorporated a range of pedagogies into their classes. The most frequently employed pedagogies for both the JMLPE and control group teachers were class discussion, lecture, working with primary source documents, reading out loud, and Internet research. For the most part, the pedagogies employed daily or weekly by teachers remained consistent from pretest to posttest. A notable exception was the decline in the percentage of JMLPE teachers who used lectures daily or weekly from 88% to 80%. This finding tracks with prior research on WTP indicating that teachers dedicated less time to lecturing and more to active pedagogies associated with the curriculum (Owen, Hartzell, and Sanchez, 2020). There was a decrease in control group teachers' use of reading out loud, class discussion, group discussion, and library research from pretest to posttest. (See Table 99.)

Table 99
Pedagogy Use
Daily or Weekly

	JMLPE			Control		
	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig
Lecture	88%	80%	.00	81%	80%	NS
Socratic method	33%	32%	NS	30%	29%	NS
Reading out loud	68%	65%	NS	70%	53%	.00
Class discussion	93%	92%	NS	94%	88%	.00
Group discussion	90%	88%	NS	88%	81%	.00
Library research	12%	13%	NS	63%	50%	.00
Internet research	68%	70%	NS	65%	68%	NS
Work with primary documents	75%	76%	NS	76%	73%	NS
Flipped classroom	19%	14%	.00	19%	24%	.00
Guest speakers	3%	3%	NS	0%	3%	NS
Essay writing	29%	31%	NS	31%	28%	NS
Kagan method	22%	23%	NS	20%	24%	.00
Notebooks or journals	66%	64%	NS	64%	63%	NS

Project-based Instruction

Teachers participating in JMLPE engaged students in project-based learning as they prepared for the simulated congressional hearings. Most JMLPE and control group teachers incorporated group or class projects into their instruction. (See Table 100.) Before JMLPE, 89% percent of teachers used group projects in their classes, which increased to 94% post-JMLPE. As WTP involves the entire class, the use of class projects rose from 51% to 60%. The control group teachers' use of class projects increased moderately from 34% to 41%.

Table 100
Project-Based Instruction

	JMLPE			Control		
	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig
Individual Projects	92%	89%	.01	95%	91%	NS
Group Projects	89%	94%	NS	87%	87%	.00
Class Projects	51%	60%	.00	34%	41%	.00
Digital Projects	82%	75%	.00	75%	75%	.00
Portfolio Projects	21%	21%	.00	22%	25%	.00

Classroom Activities

JMLPE teachers were more likely to include classroom activities that have students practice civic skills than those in the control group. (See Table 101.) A trademark of the WTP curriculum is the use of simulated congressional hearings as a performative assessment tool. Students work collaboratively to research a civics related question, develop an argument, and prepare to answer questions from a panel of judges. The use of simulated hearings by JMLPE teachers increased from 26% to 89%, which is not surprising as it is a central component of the curriculum. Slightly more than 15% of control group teachers used simulated hearings pre- and post-study. JMLPE teachers' use of other civics related activities also rose. After JMLPE, teachers were more likely to incorporate mock elections, moot court, debates, and speeches in their classes, and have their students meet with government officials or community leaders. The same pattern was not evident among control group teachers. JMLPE helped teachers incorporate instruction of skills that are valuable for both civics and other subjects across the curriculum in their classrooms. JMLPE teachers increased their inclusion of STEM skills in their instruction. Use STEM skills grew from 43% to 50%. The percentage of JMLPE teachers who had their students conduct surveys increased from 49% to 57%.

Table 101
Classroom Activities

	JMLPE			Control		
	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig
Mock election	42%	47%	.00	39%	28%	NS
Moot court	20%	25%	.00	14%	18%	NS
Debates	76%	84%	.00	81%	72%	.00
Plays or skits	40%	39%	NS	39%	29%	.00
Simulated hearings	26%	89%	NS	16%	17%	NS
Conduct surveys	49%	57%	.00	47%	53%	NS
Student speeches	60%	66%	.00	53%	48%	NS
Take part in a civics competition	19%	29%	.00	13%	14%	.00
Write and/or circulate a petition	18%	15%	NS	18%	15%	NS
Write letters to government officials	41%	28%	.00	45%	33%	.00
Create civics materials, newsletters, videos, websites	36%	35%	NS	36%	42%	.00
Take field trips to government or historic sites	40%	33%	.00	38%	27%	.00
Meet with government officials/community leaders	37%	42%	.00	27%	26%	NS
Draft legislation	24%	25%	NS	23%	20%	NS
Use STEM skills	43%	50%	.00	50%	48%	NS

Emphasis on Core Civics Topics

Following JMLPE, teachers were more likely to place a great deal of emphasis on core civics topics in their classes. (See Table 102.) Instruction about important civic concepts, such as the principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and Constitution, increased slightly from 71% to 74% and educating students about government and how it works increased from 75% to 78%. While these are modest gains, teachers in the control group placed less emphasis on these topics from pretest to posttest. The percentage of control group teachers who placed a great deal of emphasis on core democratic principles decreased from 75% to 57%, and the percentage highlighting how government works declined from 81% to 65%. Teachers were less likely to instruct students about media and politics than cover topics related to American history and government. However, the percentage of JMLPE teachers who prepared their students to use digital technology and social media to engage with politics increased significantly from 24% to 44%. A similar increase on this item, from 27% to 52%, was evident for the control group. Preparing students to follow government and politics through media increased from 34% to 43% for the JMLPE teachers and from 33% to 38% for the control group. Civics provides opportunities to engage with content and skills from other subjects. After the JMLPE intervention, teachers were more likely to emphasize STEM skills in their classrooms. The percentage of JMLPE teachers integrating STEM into their classes regularly increased from 13% to 23%. There was no concurrent change in the use of STEM by control group teachers.

Table 102
Instructional Topic Emphasis
A Great Deal

	JMLPE			Control		
	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig
Educating students about core democratic principles as set forth in the Declaration and Constitution	71%	74%	NS	75%	57%	.00
Educating students about government and how it works	75%	78%	NS	81%	65%	.00
Teaching students about current events	54%	57%	NS	54%	59%	.05
Preparing students to take an active role in community affairs	44%	46%	NS	45%	41%	.05
Preparing students to follow government and politics through media	34%	43%	.00	33%	38%	.05
Preparing students to use digital technology and social media to engage with politics[a]	24%	44%	.00	27%	52%	.05
Teaching students about the economic system	29%	25%	.05	33%	26%	.05
Integrating STEM skills into the civics, social studies, and/or history curriculum	13%	23%	.00	17%	19%	NS
Developing an understanding of different cultures	61%	50%	.00	61%	59%	NS

Encouraging students to be aware of social conditions	60%	60%	NS	62%	68%	.05
Educating students about the relationship of the United States to other nations and world affairs	45%	52%	.00	49%	48%	NS

[a]Item was not included in the index

An index measuring the extent to which teachers integrated civics and related topics into the curriculum was created. The mean score for the topic index increased significantly for JMLPE teachers. (See Table 103.) JMLPE teachers started with a baseline score of 23.61 which increased to 24.40 after the intervention. This mean difference of .79, a 3% increase from pre to post, was significant at p≤.01. The small effect size of .18 is associated with an improvement index of +7 percentile points. The control group's mean score decreased by .28 points, which was not statistically significant. Among the subgroups of teachers, EL teachers' scores on the topics index increased the most. The pretest/posttest difference of 1.57 points, an increase of 7%, was statistically significant. The moderate effect size of .36 corresponds to an improvement index of +14 percentile points. Teachers of SWDs increased by 4%, the effect size was .25 and the improvement index was +10 percentile points.

Table 103
Civics Topics Index
Difference of Means

	JMLPE	Control	SWD	EL
Pretest $\bar{x}$	23.61	23.90	24.29	23.78
Pretest SD	4.90	5.24	5.34	5.38
Posttest $\bar{x}$	24.40	23.62	25.25	25.35
Posttest SD	4.29	5.06	4.91	4.71
$\bar{x}$ Difference	.79	-.28	1.06	1.57
Sign. Difference	.01	.28	.02	.00
Percentage Change	3%	-1%	4%	7%
Effect Size	.18	-.07	.25	.36
Improvement Index	+7	-3	+10	+14
Pre/Post Correlation	.55	.68	.65	.64
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	209	79	77	72

Media Literacy Instruction

Teachers were more likely to incorporate media literacy into their lessons following the JMLPE program. (See Table 104.) Teachers were asked how often they teach five media literacy topics with answer options including (1) rarely or never, (2) sometimes, and (3) frequently. The percentage of JMLPE teachers reporting that they frequently incorporated each of the five literacy skills into their lessons increased significantly from pretest to posttest. Accessing online

news increased from 51% to 62%. Having students use websites with information on historical documents, objects, and events increased from 54% to 61%. Teaching students to be critical consumers of news rose from 67% to 75%. In contrast, the percentage of teachers in the control group instructing students to be critical consumers of news fell from 64% to 60%. Having students use websites with information on historical documents, objects, and events decreased from 61% to 52%. The gains on the other three items were smaller for the control group than the JMLPE teachers.

Table 104
Media Literacy Instruction
Frequently

	JMLPE			Control		
	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig
Teach students to be critical consumers of news	67%	75%	.00	64%	60%	.03
Access online news sites	51%	62%	.00	47%	52%	.00
Hold discussions where students consider issues from a variety of perspectives	70%	74%	.05	71%	73%	NS
Instruct students in the use of government websites and other e-government resources	34%	47%	.00	30%	40%	.01
Have students use websites with information on historical documents, objects, and events	54%	61%	.00	61%	52%	.01

A media literacy instruction index combining the five media literacy skills was constructed. The media literacy index scores increased significantly for JMLPE teachers. (See Table 105.) Their baseline mean score of 8.38 rose to 8.97 post-program, a gain of 7%. The effect size of .30 corresponded to an improvement index of +12 percentile points. The pretest/posttest mean difference was significant at the $p \leq .01$ level. The change for control group teachers was not statistically significant. The index scores of teachers of large numbers of ELs showed the greatest gains. Their baseline mean was lower than for teachers of SWDs. Their pretest mean of 8.21 increased to 9.07, a 10% change. The moderate effect size of .45 translated to an improvement index of +17 percentile points. The scores of teachers of SWDs increased from 8.55 to 9.26, an 8% gain, with an effect size of .35 and an improvement index of +14 percentile points.

Table 105
Media Literacy Instruction Index
Difference of Means

	JMLPE	Control	SWD	EL
Pretest $\bar{x}$	8.38	8.27	8.55	8.21
Pretest SD	2.12	2.24	2.31	2.27
Posttest $\bar{x}$	8.97	8.51	9.26	9.07
Posttest SD	2.05	2.23	2.11	1.98
$\bar{x}$ Difference	.59	.24	.71	.86
Sign. Difference	.00	NS	.00	.00
Percentage Change	7%	3%	8%	10%
Effect Size	.30	.10	.35	.45
Improvement Index	+12	+4	+14	+17
Pre/Post Correlation	.55	.42	.58	.61
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	213	84	76	73

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Classroom Management Efficacy

Teachers' self-efficacy in dealing with challenging situations in their classrooms was measured using nine indicators, to which they responded: (1) very little, (2) some, (3) a great deal. In general, JMLPE teachers had a higher sense of self-efficacy in this domain than teachers in the control group following the intervention, although the findings for individual indicators varied. (See Table 106.) From the outset, a majority of JMLPE teachers felt they could do a great deal to implement active learning strategies, control disruptive behavior in their class, keep difficult students on task, and find resources for working with students who have unique needs. About half of JMLPE teachers believed they could do a great deal to increase students' memory of what they had been taught in previous lessons and promote learning where there is a lack of support from the home. There were no significant changes in these findings from pretest to posttest. The percentage of JMLPE and control group teachers who felt they could get through to the most difficult students and motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork declined over the course of the intervention. In addition, control group teachers reported being less able to increase students' memory of what they had been taught in previous lessons, overcome the influence of adverse community conditions on students' learning, and find resources for working with students who have unique learning needs on the posttest.

Table 106
Classroom Management Efficacy
A Great Deal

	JMLPE			Control		
	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig	Pre	Post	χ^2 sig
to get through to the most difficult students	51%	37%	.00	52%	34%	.01
to keep students on task on difficult assignments	61%	59%	NS	66%	59%	.01
to increase students' memory of what they have been taught in previous lessons	52%	54%	NS	60%	44%	.01
to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork	40%	35%	.05	49%	30%	.01
to overcome the influence of adverse community conditions on students' learning	36%	40%	.05	52%	36%	.01
to find resources for working with students who have unique learning needs	59%	54%	NS	58%	50%	.01
to implement active learning strategies in your classroom	73%	76%	NS	78%	74%	NS
to promote learning when there is a lack of support from the home	50%	51%	NS	55%	52%	NS
to control disruptive behavior in the classroom	75%	74%	NS	75%	74%	NS

An index of the individual classroom management efficacy measures was constructed. The average scores were toward the upper end of the index pre-program. (See Table 107.) The mean scores for the JMLPE teachers did not change significantly from pretest to posttest. The baseline score of 14.67 began high and decreased nominally to 14.46 after the intervention. The average self-efficacy score of the control group decreased significantly on the posttest. Their mean score was higher than the JMLPE teachers on the pretest, at 15.30, but dropped to 14.18, lower than the JMLPE group's posttest score. This decrease was statistically significant with a moderate effect size of -.37 and improvement index of -14 percentile points. The baselines for teachers of SWDs and ELs were higher than for the total sample of teachers, but the pretest/posttest changes were small.

Table 107
Self- Efficacy: Challenging Classroom Situations Index
Difference of Means

	JMLPE	Control	SWD	EL
Pretest $\bar{x}$	14.67	15.30	15.36	15.10
Pretest SD	3.31	3.22	3.19	3.34
Posttest $\bar{x}$	14.46	14.18	15.31	14.84
Posttest SD	3.23	3.14	3.25	3.46
$\bar{x}$ Difference	-.21	-1.12	-.06	-.26
Sign. Difference	NS	.00	NS	NS
Percentage Change	-1%	-7%	--	-2%
Effect Size	-.06	-.37	-.02	-.07
Improvement Index	-2	-14	-1	-3
Pre/Post Correlation	.47	.55	.37	.40
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	210	83	76	70

Civic Skills Efficacy

Teachers responded to six items measuring their ability to promote civil discourse and cooperation among students in their classes. The majority of teachers in the JMLPE intervention and control groups had a great deal of confidence in their ability to achieve these objectives. (See Table 108.) More than 70% of JMLPE teachers indicated that they could do a great deal to hold civil discussions on difficult issues, get students to be respectful of the opinions of others, help students to think critically, and respond to difficult questions. The percentage of JMLPE teachers indicating that they could help students work together increased from 64% to 76%, the only item for which there was a significant increase. In contrast, the control group experienced significant declines across several of these measures, including holding civil discussions, addressing sensitive issues, and responding to difficult questions.

Table 108
Civic Skills Efficacy
A Great Deal

	JMLPE			Control		
	Pre	Post	Sign.	Pre	Post	Sign.
to hold civil discussions on difficult topics	74%	72%	NS	75%	61%	.05
to get students to be respectful of the opinions of others	71%	74%	NS	83%	72%	.10
to get students to work together	64%	76%	.00	70%	72%	NS
to use strategies for addressing sensitive issues	66%	66%	NS	62%	55%	.05
to help your students think critically	76%	76%	NS	76%	74%	NS
to respond to difficult questions from your students	79%	78%	NS	83%	75%	.05

JMLPE teachers began the program confident in their ability to instill civil discourse and cooperation skills in their students. (Table 109.) The JMLPE teacher baseline mean score was 11.24 out of a maximum of 13. The average score increased slightly to 11.31, but the gain was not statistically significant. Control group teachers also started the program confident in their ability to teach these skills. However, control group teacher confidence decreased from 11.37 to 10.92, a statistically significant change. The pretest/posttest decrease in scores was 4% with an effect size of -.24 and an improvement index of -9 percentile points. The pretest/posttest mean differences for teachers of SWDs and ELs were null and minimal, and not statistically significant.

Table 109
Civic Skills Efficacy Index
Difference of Means

	JMLPE	Control	SWD	EL
Pretest $\bar{x}$	11.24	11.37	11.50	11.22
Pretest SD	2.01	1.82	2.03	2.14
Posttest $\bar{x}$	11.31	10.92	11.50	11.28
Posttest SD	2.07	2.03	2.06	2.24
$\bar{x}$ Difference	.07	-.46	0	.07
Sign. Difference	NS	.02	NS	NS
Percentage Change	1%	-4%	0	1%
Effect Size	.03	-.24	.00	.03
Improvement Index	+1	-9	0	+1
Pre/Post Correlation	.46	.51	.42	.51
Sign. Correlation	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	212	83	76	73

JMLPE Program Evaluations

The teacher feedback for the JMLPE program was overwhelmingly positive. (See Table 110.) Over three-quarters of teachers said that JMLPE was very effective in increasing their content knowledge (77%), preparing them to instruct the We the People Curriculum (76%), and preparing them for the simulated hearings (76%). The program was effective in other areas, with 68% of teachers saying it was very effective in enhancing their teaching and pedagogy skills, 64% in preparing their students for civic life, and 55% in preparing them to deal with difficult topics and discussions in the classroom.

Table 110
JMLPE Professional Learning Program Evaluation

	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Very Effective
Increasing your content knowledge	77%	22%	1%
Enhancing your teaching and pedagogy skills	68%	30%	2%
Preparing you to instruct the We the People curriculum	76%	21%	3%
Preparing your students for civic life	64%	34%	2%
Preparing you to deal with difficult topics and discussions in the classroom	55%	40%	5%
Preparing you for the simulated congressional hearings	76%	22%	2%

As part of the JMLPE program, teachers were given access to many resources. (See Table 111.) JMLPE teachers rated these materials highly. The We the People textbook is available at different levels and provides compelling content that addresses civics standards. Eighty-five percent of teachers rated the textbook as either excellent or very good. Lesson plans were provided to guide teachers' instruction of civics concepts and implement the WTP curriculum, including the simulated hearings. These materials were rated as excellent or very good by 66% of JMLPE teachers. Other supporting materials, such as videos and the Center's library of resources, were considered excellent or very good by 73% of teachers. Very few teachers rated these resources as fair or poor.

Table 111
Teacher JMLPE Resource Evaluation

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
We the People Textbook	58%	27%	10%	5%	1%
Lesson Plans	39%	27%	27%	7%	1%
Supporting Materials	39%	34%	21%	5%	1%

SUMMARY

The Center for Civic Education's James Madison Legacy Project Expansion Program was successful in achieving its core objectives. The Civic Education Research Lab conducted extensive research to determine the program's impact on student and teacher outcomes. Building upon and informed by the achievements of its predecessor, the James Madison Legacy Project, the Center updated its teacher professional learning program and adapted its long-standing We the People curriculum. The program was designed to improve civic learning for students with disabilities and English learners. At the same time, the adapted professional learning and curricular materials enhanced civic education for all students.

CERL's research demonstrated that the JMLPE improved students' academic performance in civics and prepared them for community life and responsible citizenship. The civic knowledge scores of students in classes with high percentages of students with disabilities and English learners who were taught We the People improved significantly. English learners' civic knowledge also increased markedly. Middle and high school student knowledge gains far exceeded those of students who received a conventional civics class. Over 70% of We the People students reported that they understood more about American history and government after their class. They became more interested in issues and attentive to public affairs. They were more likely to feel that it was important to keep informed about what is going on in their community. Importantly, We the People students became more politically efficacious, believing that they have a say in what government does. Through the simulated congressional hearings, students developed skills necessary for community engagement. Their ability to communicate effectively and take part in civil discussions improved. They acquired media literacy skills to help them navigate the current complex media environment. They felt more prepared to participate in their community and volunteer to help others. We the People students were more likely to plan to vote if they were eligible than their control group counterparts.

The JMLPE improved access to high-quality civics instruction by working with state civics coordinators, school leaders, mentor teachers, and scholars to enhance teachers' content knowledge and instructional efficacy. The JMLPE professional learning program increased teachers' knowledge of American history and civics through interactions with subject-area specialists and access to relevant materials. It built their confidence in teaching core civic competencies and improved their ability to implement active pedagogies in their classrooms. JMLPE teachers were more likely to integrate media literacy and STEM skills into their lessons than teachers who did not receive the professional learning program. The JMLPE created a professional learning network to support instruction of We the People through a community of practice. It worked to scale the program, as teachers and schools adapted We the People and promoted the Center's curricula and resources to their colleagues.

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