


Democratic Learning

Democratic learning is 1) students and teachers working together to make students' learning a contribution to their community; 2) students working actively with problems, ideas, materials, and people as they learn skills and content; 3) students being assessed according to high degrees of academic objectives learned and contributions made to a larger community; 4) students demonstrating their learning in public settings and receiving public feedback; 5) students having escalating degrees of choice, both as individuals and as groups, within the parameters provided by the teachers.

If this is where we want to be,.... 

Student Outcomes	Teacher Outcomes	School Outcomes
<p>Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Participate in a democratic classroom. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work productively, both as individuals and as groups. • Participate in productive dialogue, debate and reflection. • Think critically. • Solve problems. • Exhibit leadership skills. • Understand multiple points of view. • Understand their roles as educated citizens. • Understand the necessity of educated citizens in sustaining a democracy. 2) Understand the relevance of their learning to their lives and their community. 3) Gain academic skills and knowledge. 4) Use skills/knowledge in the community. 5) Develop connections to communities. 6) Identify community needs. 7) Articulate and assess own learning. 8) Demonstrate learning in public settings. 	<p>Teachers will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Establish a classroom environment that facilitates democratic learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for personal connections between and among students, teachers and community. • Provide opportunities for critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership. • Locate resources for democratic learning. • Facilitate a shared vision/purpose for democratic learning among student and teachers. 2) Help students to connect their learning to their lives and the community. 3) Help students gain academic skills and knowledge. 4) Facilitate students' use of knowledge/skills in community. 5) Establish relationships between school and community. 6) Link student learning to community needs. 7) Coach students in their own assessment. 8) Help students demonstrate learning in public settings. 9) Participate in a professional community of learners about democratic learning. 10) Provide leadership for democratic learning. 	<p>Schools will support democratic learning through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Administrative support. 2) Professional development. 3) League's three-part framework (covenant, shared governance, action research). 4) Resource allocation. 5) Goal-setting and expected outcomes. 6) Community connections.

...how might we get there?

Suggested Student Activities	Suggested Teacher Activities	Suggested School Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage in decision-making related to educational objectives, classroom organization, and assessment ▪ Use group process skills ▪ Engage in tasks that feature interdependence ▪ Engage in leadership roles ▪ Engage in brainstorming and concept mapping ▪ Participate in community inquiry ▪ Engage in short-term and long-term goal setting ▪ Engage in activities, projects, and products that link learning to the community ▪ Engage in reflection ▪ Identity and document learning strengths and weaknesses ▪ Document, assess, and share own learning ▪ Engage in research ▪ Engage in activities that require them to reflect on their roles as citizens ▪ Participate in class meetings and governance structures ▪ Participate in both teacher-guided and student-guided discussions ▪ Demonstrate learning in public setting ▪ Use materials that reflect multiple points of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage students in developing a shared vision of democratic learning ▪ Incorporate learning strategies and instructional methods appropriate for a democratic classroom ▪ Help students create a democratic classroom ▪ Engage students in brainstorming and concept mapping ▪ Engage students in community inquiry ▪ Provide activities that link learning to the community ▪ Help students to develop products and projects that reflect democratic learning ▪ Provide multiple opportunities for student reflection ▪ Develop and use multiple forms of student assessment ▪ Develop their own and students' research skills ▪ Engage in professional development ▪ Participate in ongoing learning community ▪ Develop and use self-assessment tools and strategies ▪ Develop and share expertise with colleagues and League 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and refine school-wide covenant ▪ Develop and refine decision-making process ▪ Develop and refine an action research plan ▪ Involve all stakeholders in decision-making process ▪ Provide resources, professional development, space, and time to support democratic learning ▪ Support the use of assessments that reflect democratic learning ▪ Assess needs of community ▪ Communicate with stakeholders via a variety of methods and media ▪ Create and support teacher learning communities ▪ Align teacher evaluation with democratic learning

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