

California Adult Education Implementation of English Literacy and Civics Education in California



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Implementation of English Literacy and Civics Education in California

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List of Acronyms

Please refer to the list below for acronyms used in the report.

Acronym	Definition
ABE	Adult Basic Education
ADA	average daily attendance
AEFLA	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
AEO	Adult Education Office
ASE	Adult Secondary Education
CAHSEE	California High School Exit Exam
CALPRO	California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project
CASAS	Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System
CBOs	Community-based Organizations
CCC	California Conservation Corps
CD	Compact Disc
CDC	California Department of Corrections
CDLP	California Distance Learning Project
CCDs	Community College Districts
CDE	California Department of Education
COE	County Offices of Education
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
CYA	California Youth Authority
DDS	Department of Developmental Services
DQSC	Data Quality Standards Checklist
DVD	Digital Video Disc
ED	United States Department of Education
EL Civics	English Literacy and Civics Education
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESL-Cit	ESL-Citizenship
GED	General Education Development
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986
K-12	Kindergarten through Grade Twelve
NRS	National Reporting System
OTAN	Outreach and Technical Assistance Network
OVAE	Office of Vocational and Adult Education
POWER	Providing Options for the Workplace, Education, and Rehabilitation
SCANS	Secretary's Commission for Achieving the Necessary Skills
TIMAC	Technology Integration Mentor Academy
U.S.	United States
USCIS	United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
USDE	United States Department of Education
VABE	Vocational Adult Basic Education
VESL	Vocational English as a Second Language
WIA Title II	Workforce Investment Act Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
WIB	Workforce Investment Boards

Implementation of English Literacy and Civics Education in California

Introduction

To participate effectively in the education, employment, and civic opportunities of this country, adult English language learners must master English and understand and navigate American institutions and systems such as government, education, workplace, banking, and health care. English Literacy and Civics Education (EL Civics), funded under Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), expands English literacy services and promotes the development of integrated programs that incorporate English language and literacy instruction and civics education.

EL Civics, as defined in the November 17, 1999, Federal Register, is “an educational program that emphasizes contextualized instruction focusing on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation, and United States (U.S.) history and government to help students acquire the skills and knowledge to become active and informed parents, workers, and community members.”

In implementing the EL Civics program, the California Department of Education (CDE) has made a specific effort to build the capacity of agencies serving adult English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. The EL Civics program in California requires agencies to:

- Survey students to identify their needs and goals
- Develop instructional objectives that match student needs for civic participation and English language development
- Develop and use performance-based assessment plans approved by the CDE to measure the outcomes of civic participation instruction
- Monitor and document students’ attainment of identified goals, learning gains, and other outcomes
- Document ways in which students learn to work with community organizations in their neighborhoods
- Provide accessible program and classroom resources and technical assistance

Civic objectives developed for this program require students be actively involved in their communities through activities that access various government and community agencies, such as interacting with school officials or health care providers, recognizing and acting upon the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords, researching methods of and obtaining suitable housing, and identifying and accessing employment and training resources.

This document examines the implementation of the EL Civics program in California, learner goal attainment and performance data, benefits to program implementation, and the availability and use of instructional and program resources. Local agency respondents to the *2005-06 Survey of WIA Title II Programs in California* provide information highlighting the impact of EL Civics on learners, their families, their instructional programs, and the communities in which they live and work.

Focus Areas

Agencies funded for EL Civics in California may select from two program focus areas: Citizenship Preparation (programs with a primary focus on preparing learners to obtain their United States citizenship) and Civic Participation (programs with a primary focus on facilitating learners' civic involvement). Agencies were given the opportunity to apply for funding for one or both options.

Both EL Civics programs document learning gains using Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) pre- and post-tests along with additional assessment options. Citizenship Preparation students may take the written CASAS Government and History for Citizenship test and the oral CASAS Citizenship Interview Test, while Civic Participation students have the option of taking up to three agency-developed, CDE-approved performance-based assessments.

Program Data

In 2005-06, the CDE funded 289 agencies to provide WIA Title II educational services to 833,624 adult students. Of the 289 agencies, 189 agencies received funding to provide EL Civics educational services to 208,910 adult learners (eight fewer agencies and 8,047 more students than the previous year). The 189 EL Civics funded agencies consisted of 18 agencies that received funding for EL Civics only, and 171 that received funding for EL Civics and WIA Title II, Section 231. Of the 208,910 students enrolled in EL Civics, 24,022 were enrolled in Citizenship Preparation and 193,315 were enrolled in Civic Participation¹. Adult schools served the majority of these EL Civics enrollees (80.4 percent) followed by community colleges, community-based organizations, and library literacy programs. Of the 189 EL Civics funded agencies, 184 responded to the WIA Title II survey. Of these respondents, 47 (26 percent) were funded for Civic Participation, 13 (7 percent) were funded for Citizenship Preparation, and 124 (67 percent) received funding for both program areas.

Learner Performance Data

EL Civics students, who comprise 25.1 percent of all WIA Title II students, outperformed all WIA Title II students in four major areas: (1) percentage of students who qualified for inclusion in the Federal Tables; (2) percentage of students who took pre- and post-tests;

¹ Numbers of students enrolled in Civic Participation and Citizenship Preparation programs will not equal the total number of EL Civics students because of the dual enrollment of some students in both programs.

(3) percentage of students who completed an instructional level; and (4) percentage of students who advanced one or more instructional levels.

Table 1.1 compares data from EL Civics learners with data from WIA Title II learners as a whole (including EL Civics learners).

Table 1.1 – 2005-06 WIA EL Civics Program Learners Compared with Total WIA Learners

	Total WIA Title II***		EL Civics	
	N	%	N	%
A. Completed Entry Records	833,624		208,910	
B. Learners dropped from Federal Tables*	250,536	30.2	3,794	1.8
C. Learners qualified for Federal Table 4*	583,088	69.9	205,116	98.2
D. Learners qualified for Federal Table 4B (persisters)**	314,931	54.0	128,790	62.8
E. Learners completed a level**	197,472	33.9	82,538	40.2
F. Learners advanced more than one level**	127,785	21.9	56,306	27.5

*Percentages for learners dropped and qualifying for Federal Tables based on total completed Entry Records.

** Percentages for persisters and level completion based on the number of learners who qualified for Federal Table 4.

***Including EL Civics

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Program Structure

Citizenship Preparation

EL Civics Citizenship Preparation programs focus on students whose goal is to obtain United States citizenship. Students in these programs benefit by learning about the types of questions that may appear on the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) citizenship tests. In addition, they gain confidence to respond to questions in both written and oral form in their daily lives.

Of the 12,804 Citizenship Preparation students who took the Government and History for Citizenship Test, 82.7 percent (10,590) passed. Of the 3,968 Citizenship Preparation students who took the oral CASAS Citizenship Interview Test, 73 percent (2,895) passed. Some students attended and were assessed in both Civic Participation and Citizenship Preparation classes.

One comment taken from the WIA Title II Program Evaluation Survey identified the following benefit:

Increased student confidence to interact within the class and the community has been the most beneficial. Students have learned how to create resumes, fill out applications, write letters to landlords, talk to health care professionals, and interact with their classmates to a much greater degree than with the regular curriculum.

An additional benefit of these programs is the sharing of USCIS testing experiences among students, thereby helping to build the confidence of classmates about to take the exams. This sharing of experiences is a key factor in student success, because individuals who are not enrolled in an educational program often face a number of barriers in their attempts to pass the USCIS test. Some of the barriers include:

- Misunderstanding the naturalization process
- Fear of the USCIS system
- Not understanding the legal terminology
- Not allowing for enough hours of study prior to participating in the USCIS interview

Civic Participation

Agencies with Civic Participation programs may select from a list of 46 pre-approved civic objectives or may develop new civic objectives, with accompanying language and literacy objectives, to meet learner needs. For example, an agency may choose the civic objective of “access the health care system and be able to interact with the providers.” This objective has corresponding language and literacy objectives (such as “develop a list of questions to ask community health care providers” or “describe symptoms of an illness”). Agencies select and teach the language and literacy objectives that best match their students’ needs and that will assist students in attaining the civic objective.

Civic objectives used in California Civic Participation programs must meet these criteria:

- Integrate English language and literacy instruction into civics education
- Focus on content that helps students understand the government and history of the United States, understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and participate effectively in the education, employment, and civic opportunities this country has to offer
- Integrate active participation of the learners in community activities

Benefits of Civic Participation

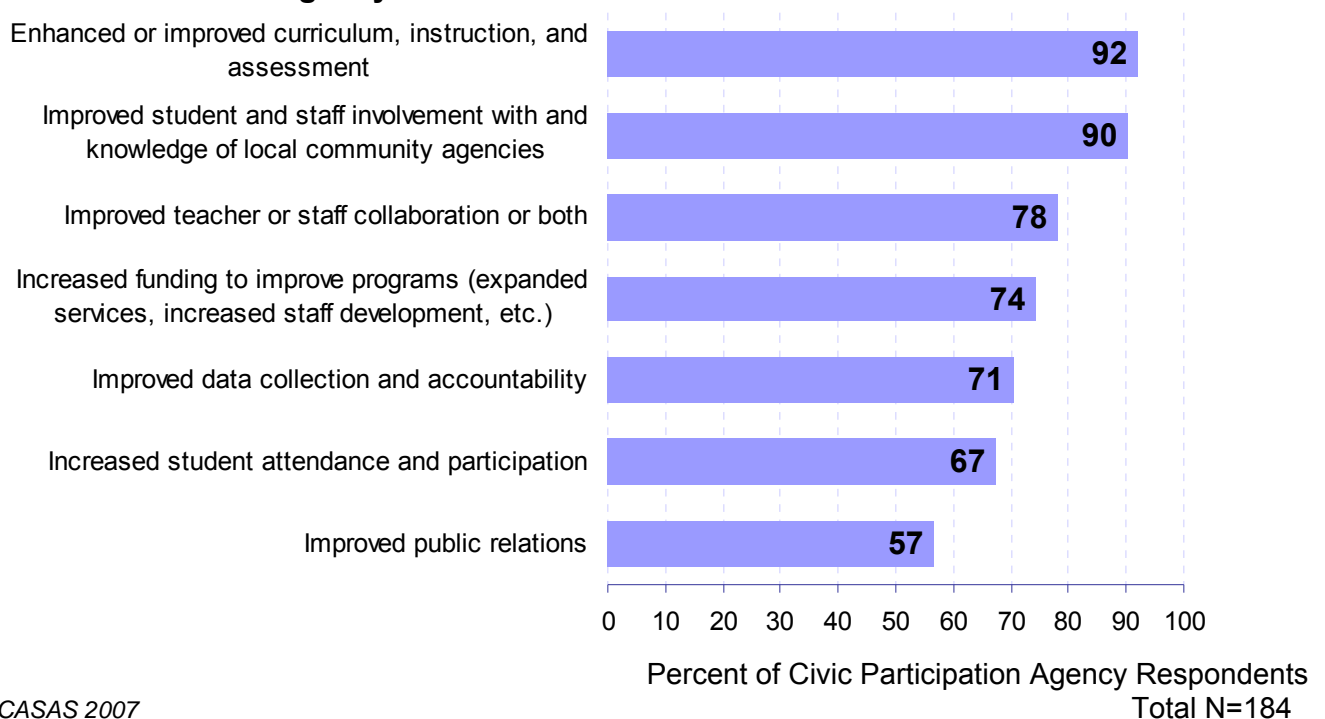
Benefits to the Agency As a Whole

To identify and effectively document the benefits and barriers to agencies and students involved in Civic Participation, the WIA Title II Survey included several questions specifically targeted toward respondents with Civic Participation programs.

The survey asked agency respondents to indicate the benefits of Civic Participation program implementation that have affected their agency as a whole. More than 70 percent of the respondents selected the following five benefits: (1) enhanced or improved curriculum, instruction, and assessment; (2) improved student and staff involvement with and knowledge of local community agencies; (3) improved teacher or staff collaboration; (4) increased funding to improve programs; and (5) improved data collection and accountability.

In addition to CASAS pre- and post-tests administered to all WIA Title II students, California EL Civics Civic Participation programs assess students through use of additional performance-based assessments selected or developed to measure student attainment of identified civic objectives. Statewide, students passed 132,112 (85.7 percent) of the 154,092 Civic Participation additional performance-based assessments administered to them.

Figure 1.1 – 2005-06 Benefits of Civic Participation Program Implementation That Have Affected the Agency as a Whole



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The following comments provide examples of how agencies are facilitating program improvement through involvement in Civic Participation activities:

Enhancing Curriculum

Civic participation has enhanced our curriculum and instruction by providing students with true real-life situations in which to practice the skills learned in the classroom. Students were asked which skills they most wanted to learn through a survey process and objectives were selected based on the outcome of the survey. Because student input determined the objectives, attention to lessons and attendance showed improvement. (medium-sized adult school)

[The most beneficial component is] enhanced curriculum, instruction and assessment: Additional assessments are closely aligned with curriculum and instruction and have increased the cohesiveness of the program. (medium-sized adult school)

[The most beneficial component is] enhanced/improved curriculum, instruction and assessment. We are choosing Civic Participation curriculum and assessments as a way to measure appropriate student learning outcomes. Our outcomes are language based, so EL Civics provides meaningful content and appropriate assessment that is field tested and standardized at a local level. (medium-sized community college district)

Involving Learners in the Community

Civic Participation at [our agency] has improved student and staff involvement with many community agencies in the [county]. Over 30 new community partnerships were formed as a result of our health and education information fairs. (large community college district)

Civic Participation has definitely furthered student involvement with local community resources and agencies. Staff has been more collaborative and has worked to enrich curriculum and instruction. (medium-sized adult school)

We have found that our students and staff involvement with and knowledge of local community agencies have improved. This has made it easier for students to determine what local agency can best help them with their given situation. It has also helped us make a working relationship with those outside organizations that has proven to be very useful to our program. (small community-based organization)

Improving Accountability

The implementation of [The] Civic Participation program helped improve the assessment process [and] collect and analyze the data. The instruction became more focused and creative. (small community-based organization)

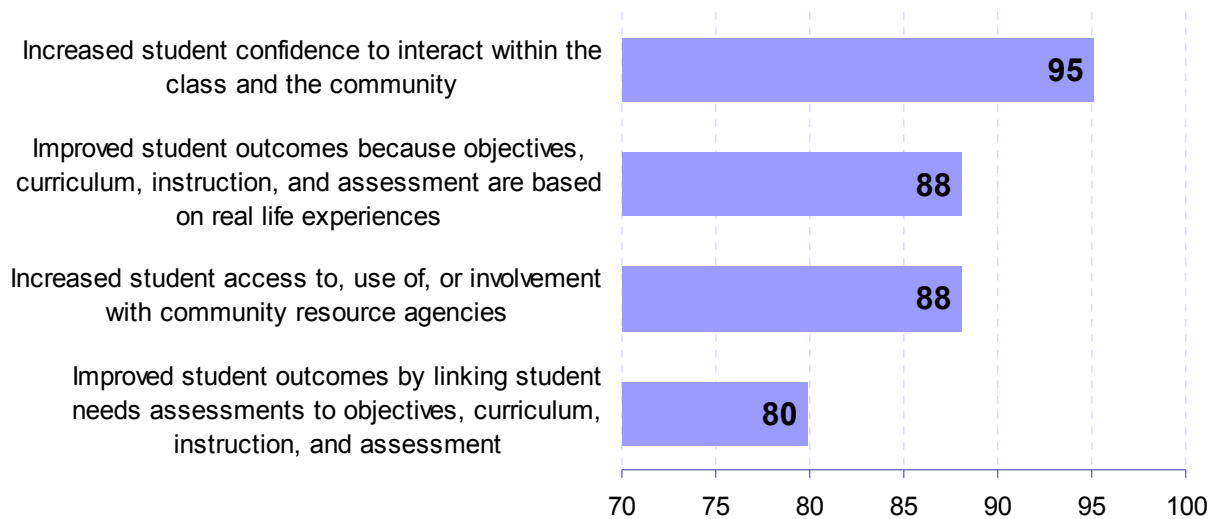
[The Civics Participation Program has] improved our internal data collection process and reliability. (medium-sized adult school)

Benefits to Students

The survey asked agencies to indicate the benefits their Civic Participation program implementation has had on students. As in the 2004-05 survey, the most frequently cited benefit was increased student confidence in interacting with others within the class and in the community.

Additional benefits noted include the increased student access to, use of, or involvement with community agencies; improved student outcomes because objectives, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are based on real-life experiences; and improved student outcomes by linking student needs assessments to objectives, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Figure 1.2 – 2005-06 Benefits of Civic Participation Program Implementation That Have Affected Students



Percent of Civic Participation Agency Respondents
Total N=184

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When asked to indicate the most beneficial element of the Civic Participation program to their students, some respondents cited more than one element. All responses were

divided among four categories. Listed below are the four categories and the number of responders in each category:

- Improved student confidence to interact within the class and community – 73
- Increased student access to, use of, or involvement with community agencies – 56
- Improved student outcomes because objectives, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are based on real-life experiences – 43
- Improved student outcomes by linking student needs assessments to objectives, curriculum, instruction, and assessment – 30

The quotes below provide examples of many of these benefits:

Improved Student Confidence

Improving student confidence has been the most rewarding [benefit of the Civic Participation Program]. One student said he now knew how to talk to his child's teacher after the class visit to a local school. (medium-sized agency)

Most beneficial is the fact that our students have much more confidence when interacting with the community service providers we invite to our health and employment fairs. (medium-sized adult school)

Improved Student Outcomes

Civic Participation improved student outcomes because objectives, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are based on real-life experiences and student needs. Students are motivated to persist in the program and to use their English skills outside of the classroom in the community. They feel empowered by their knowledge of community agencies and resources. (medium-sized adult school)

[The most beneficial element is] improved student outcomes because objectives, curriculum, instruction and assessment are based on real-life experiences. Students report a higher level of confidence after preparing for and taking an assessment that involves a real-life activity, e.g., a job interview or a conversation with the doctor. (medium-sized adult school)

[The most beneficial element is] improved student outcomes because objectives, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are based on real-life experiences. The oral assessments are outstanding. (medium-sized adult school)

Increased Student Involvement with Community Agencies

Most beneficial was increasing student access to, use of, and involvement with the community AND increasing their confidence to interact within the school and community. (medium-sized adult school)

Students are becoming more involved within the community because of the design of the EL Civics program. (medium-sized adult school)

[The most beneficial aspect of the EL Civics program is] improved student and staff involvement with local community agencies. We brought in a doctor for health issues. We brought in a nurse for CPR and safety civics. A school counselor came to each class and shared adult educational opportunities and the county employability resource person provided two assemblies to speak on employment opportunities. (medium-sized adult school)

Student Persistence

Agencies were asked to identify key factors that had a positive impact on student persistence. Agencies most often cited instruction targeted to student needs and goals and student perception of individual teachers as having a positive impact on student persistence. Table 1.1 summarizes agency responses by agency size.

Table 1.2 – Key Factors with a Positive Effect on Student Persistence in EL Civics Programs

	Large (n=14)		Medium (n=116)		Small (n=54)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Instruction Targeted to Student Needs And Goals	13	92.9	83	71.6	47	87.0
Student Perception of Teachers	13	92.9	80	69.0	34	63.0
Student Access to Technology	9	64.3	55	47.4	20	37.0
Reward And Recognition Programs for Attendance	7	50.0	25	21.6	12	22.2
Open Enrollment	6	42.9	47	40.5	20	37.0
Availability of Student Support Services	6	42.9	40	34.5	20	37.0
Student Goal Setting	6	42.9	37	31.9	15	27.8
Provision of Childcare	5	35.7	54	46.6	27	50.0
Reward And Recognition Programs for Goal Attainment	5	35.7	27	23.3	13	24.1
Student Orientation Program	5	35.7	32	27.6	11	20.4
Managed Enrollment	2	14.3	15	12.9	13	24.1

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EL Civics Resources

Eighty-eight percent of EL Civics agencies anticipated professional development for instructors as a high-level or medium-level priority. EL Civics agencies have taken advantage of the resources provided through the CDE and the four state Leadership Projects. These organizations, which include California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO), CASAS, California Distance Learning Project (CDLP), and Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN), assist in the professional development for EL Civics programs. EL Civics Program Specialists have worked closely with the CDE Adult Education Regional Consultants to provide comprehensive professional development and capacity-building technical assistance that addresses compliance, program implementation, and continuous improvement issues. The EL Civics Web site provides agencies with easy and immediate access to EL Civics curriculum, materials, resources, and information which includes an alignment of CASAS Instructional Materials Quick Search information to EL Civics objectives. Agencies report the assistance provided by OTAN in developing and implementing technology plans is especially beneficial to their agencies. Staffs become proficient in the use of technology and students have benefited as they have learned to use technology as a means to access and increase their involvement in community activities.

Beginning in 2003, the CDE, in collaboration with the four State Leadership Projects, has supported enhanced EL Civics program development and implementation through:

- The development, maintenance, and regular updating of an EL Civics Web site, www.casas.org/elc, a dynamic, interactive site that provides a single online location for all California EL Civics information. The Web site provides access to a standardized database of 46 pre-approved Civic Participation objectives with accompanying language and literacy objectives and additional assessment plans. Using the Web site in its interactive mode, local providers can electronically select, and customize if desired, their own Civic Objectives and Additional Assessment Plans based on the identified needs and goals of their students. The centralized EL Civics Web site facilitates and streamlines communication among the funded agencies, the CDE Regional Consultants, and the EL Civics Program Specialists.
- Training and technical assistance in multiple modes on all aspects of implementing the EL Civics program - from needs assessment, additional assessments, and accountability to the evaluation and application of student learning in real-life contexts. This process allows agency staff to attend regularly scheduled regional training workshops and networking meetings, access Web-based training and other online resources, and use on-site training modules in video home system (VHS) and digital video disc (DVD) formats.

The following quotes cite examples of how agencies used the State Leadership Projects to support their EL Civics Programs:

Lesson plans, work packets and assessment materials have been developed from curricula materials obtained from [The] OTAN resource library for the specific EL Civics objectives approved for our agency. (medium-sized adult school)

....[We] are an active member of the OTAN Employment Training Library and take advantage of its numerous resources. Instructors videotape employment mock interviews and utilize them to identify students' individual strengths and weaknesses. Instructors get access to the latest trade related news, curricular materials and resources, recommendations regarding EL Civics materials and publications through the OTAN and CASAS websites. (small community-based organization)

This agency has developed lesson plans, work packets, and complete EL Civics units (such as Housing, Finance, Health, DMV, Employment, and many others). We have relied on OTAN for many of these resources as well as CASAS.... (medium-sized adult school)

I have found the networking meetings [made available by CALPRO] very helpful for gathering information to clarify program implementation procedures and sharing curriculum building ideas in the area of EL Civics. (small community college district)

The El Civics group meetings [made available by CALPRO] have provided clarification on program management and funding issues. (medium-sized adult school)

The information provided in the California Distance Learning Project was very helpful in the design and implementation of our distance learning program. (medium-sized adult school)

Agencies cited a variety of additional resources they relied upon such as ESL and Civics Video Series, computer programs, Web sites, instructional DVDs/compact discs (CDs), California EL Civics Mini-grant resources distributed by OTAN, ESL Textbooks, newspapers, and magazines. Their comments provide examples of the wide range of resources available to EL Civics instructors:

Teachers have developed Internet activities to introduce students to community resources, e.g., city services, the library, the Department of Labor website, the One-Stop website, the U.S. Government Web Portal, etc. Teachers have also contributed lesson plans and classroom handouts. These materials are made available to all EL Civics instructors, along with commercially available materials, which include DVDs and other EL Civics products purchased from OTAN. (medium-sized adult school)

[We provide] lesson plans, worksheets, videos, audio tapes, internet resources, computers, overhead projectors, transparencies, real life materials. (small community-based organization)

EL Civics agencies also rely upon additional instructional resources such as computers, guest speakers in the classroom, field trips, and video cameras. EL Civics agencies have compiled an extensive list of resources that are organized in binders for instructor use and reference.

The following comments cite additional examples of resources provided to EL Civics instructors:

Our school has developed instructional materials for each of the 15+ objectives we have implemented. Those materials are organized in binders for each class level Low Beginning through Advanced. Each set also includes the Coordinator's master binder. The binders feature required and optional instructional materials, including Internet projects, pre-assessments and assessment instructions, pre-post survey sheets, recommended schedules of instructional delivery, and reference materials for teachers and students. (medium-sized adult school)

Every semester the EL Civics Coordinator works with teachers to create materials to support teaching EL Civics modules chosen for the semester. The materials, including objectives and assessment plans, sample lessons, sample assessments, PowerPoint presentations, vocabulary lists, lists of related texts and list of related language competencies, are assembled in binders for each campus and can also be downloaded from [our] website. (large community college district)

Teachers developed big binders for each main topic such as employment, health, education, banking, housing and security which include lesson plans, activity worksheets, names of videos, and names, levels, and pages of textbooks and workbooks for each topic. (medium-sized adult school)

Teachers are provided with a curriculum packet for each EL Civics unit. These are reviewed at a staff meeting prior to the start of each unit. Materials come from a variety of sources and are modified to suit specific levels. Efforts are made to provide DVD or video for some part of each unit. Useful websites are provided. Correlations with the core text are also provided. (medium-sized adult school)

The use of the technology/computer lab really boosted excitement and student confidence (and therefore attendance). Also the use of CD-ROMs and videos added more excitement to the curriculum. Effective use of 'field trips' by the teacher boosted much confidence in accessing community resources as well. (small adult school)

Resource notebooks have been developed for each objective being taught. The notebooks include worksheets, real-life samples, and other teacher resources related to teaching the objective. Assessment packets have been developed that include detailed instructions, scoring guides, and all of the materials that teachers need to implement an additional assessment. (large adult school)

Curriculum guides are used to inform instructors of objectives and teaching strategies that are effective. (medium-sized adult school)

We have developed lesson plans and administration tools for each of the approved objectives. It has made implementing EL Civics much easier for each instructor and increased the number of participants. (medium-sized adult school)

Modules have been prepared and provided to teachers in a binder format with all worksheets and reference materials either included or computer websites given. The binders are all inclusive in that a teacher can present the module with little or no outside research needed to done. (large adult school)

EL Civics — Promoting Student Success

The design and implementation of EL Civics programs provides an opportunity for EL Civics students to apply what they have learned in the classroom and make a positive impact in their lives and in their communities. As stated by one EL Civics agency:

“Highly increased student confidence to interact both within the classroom setting and in the community has been exceptional for both the students and our community.”

The following examples illustrate ways that students have made successful transitions from classroom activities to community action.

- Students from Anderson Valley’s EL Civics classes created *Secrets of Salsa*, a cookbook of traditional family recipes never written down. Native English-speaking community members joined the project as volunteers to do artwork, computer work, and photography, and ultimately produced a film documenting the process. The women also organized a quilt-making and storytelling project with the adult school and the Even Start program. Some of the women have made presentations at educational conferences and several have given cooking classes. Because of increased self-esteem and language abilities, many of the women are gaining their citizenship, passing the General Education Development (GED), and transitioning to job training or college classes.
- EL Civics classes at Basic Adult Spanish Education (BASE) in Canoga Park offer CPR and first aid training — training specifically requested by the students as one of their

objectives. Improved English language skills plus CPR and first aid training are necessary in order to volunteer at their children's schools. The training has given the students the confidence to volunteer and has provided the expertise to handle emergencies: three graduates whose family members had heart attacks were able to manage the situations until paramedics arrived, and one student reported using the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge a small toy her child had swallowed. A group of students created and used posters illustrating emergency health and safety issues to make oral presentations to their classes and to parents at their children's schools.

- An intermediate/advanced EL Civics class at Ventura Adult School decided to learn how to access information to participate in school and local government activities. After touring City Hall and talking with the City Council, the class felt empowered to speak to local officials about making health care available to more than 5,000 children in Ventura who did not qualify for health insurance. When the class discovered the County Board of Supervisors would be addressing the topic in the coming months, the student's hand-carried letters they had written to the board meetings where two students were asked to make a presentation. Although the Children's Healthcare Initiative has not yet passed in Ventura, the students have become increasingly aware of local issues, of their ability to make a difference in the community, and of the need to continue their work to improve community life.
- For many adult students, depending upon their cultural background, talking with police may evoke an array of negative emotions. Vista Adult School addressed this issue with their "Talking with Police" program. The year-long program, with supporting curriculum, incorporated suggestions from the Vista Weed and Seed Program and the Vista Crime Prevention Commission. The program was timely after three officer-involved fatalities occurred in Vista in August 2005. The officers were open and honest and encouraged questions leading to significant interaction. As a result of the presentations, one student submitted an application to become a volunteer translator for the San Diego Sheriff's Department, several students scheduled appointments with the community service officer to report crimes, and several other students referred family members to these agencies. The program has helped the Vista Adult EL Civics/ESL student population feel connected to, and confident in, the community in which they live and work.

The Impact of EL Civics

Agencies report they are investing major amounts of time, talent, and other resources into making the EL Civics program highly successful and valued by students. Teaching English in the context of Civic Participation or Citizenship Preparation, the two EL Civics program options, is meeting the needs of adult students well beyond the goal of the program while increasing participation of students in their communities. In many cases students have had life-changing experiences that have allowed them to be an integral part of their newly adopted country. One of the most significant benefits of the program reported by EL Civics agencies is increased student confidence when interacting in the classrooms and the community.

The following quotes reflect the positive impact the EL Civics program continues to have in California:

“Prior to the (EL Civics grant) funding, we were assessing students based on teacher-designed tests. These tests had no real benchmarks or standardized way of identifying the student’s level... The curriculum improved due to the course alignments.”

“Our outcomes are language based so EL Civics provides meaningful content and appropriate assessment that is field-tested and standardized at the local level.”

“Civic participation has definitely furthered student involvement with local community resources and agencies. Staff has been more collaborative and has worked to enrich curriculum and instruction.”

“Civic participation also gave our school additional resources to integrate technology in all the programs.”

“EL Civics has provided additional resources to do very creative instructional activities such as class projects (i.e. class yearbooks, directories, etc.) and instructional computer labs with the latest ESL software.”