

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: COMMUNITY ENGAGED CLASSROOMS

## 3-Hour Interactive Workshop

It is essential that students understand the ways in which political decisions—often at the local and state levels—shape the world around them, and that they have the capacity to influence those decisions through individual and collective action. This professional development session will help teachers break down the barriers that exist between the classroom and community civic life. Teachers will learn how to foster students' civic and political efficacy and their ability to cooperate with others, and they will leave equipped with lessons, strategies, projects, and activities to engage students with their local community.

### Session Overview

**Aims of a Community Engaged Classroom:** In order to be responsive to the needs of their communities, teachers and students must understand the core principles of community engagement.

- Teachers will learn how community engagement projects can enhance and complement student learning.
- Teachers will examine a series of projects and initiatives led by youth activists from across the country.

**Community Inventory and Root Causes:** It is important that students not only reflect on what they believe to be an issue in their community; they must learn more about the community itself.

- Teachers will learn about the concept of taking a “community inventory” to help students develop responsive community engagement projects.
- A Close Up facilitator will guide teachers in a practical activity which helps them identify the root causes of issues in their communities.

**Techniques and Practicum for Community Engagement:** Community engagement projects take many forms depending on teacher and student goals, but these key structures, principles, and techniques will make projects and student learning more successful.

- A Close Up facilitator will guide teachers through several key steps in a community engagement project.
- Teachers will take part in a model lesson which lays the foundation for successful community engagement projects.

**Creating Effective Community Engagement:** It is essential for students to retain ownership of their community engagement projects, with the teacher providing critical support and feedback on their efforts.

- Teachers will explore the concept of goal markers and learn how their feedback can play a vital role in shaping the outcome of students' community engagement efforts.
- Teachers will participate in an activity addressing “scalability,” and learn techniques to help students adjust the scope of their projects to improve their likelihood of success.

**Integrating Community Engagement into Your Classroom:** Community engagement often requires a great deal of time and effort on the part of students and teachers. However, it can be structured to complement curriculum when integrated properly.

- Teachers will explore opportunities for community engagement locally, nationally, and in virtual spaces.
- A Close Up facilitator will guide teachers through a critical discussion of how best to apply community engagement projects within their curriculum as a form of assessment.

### What's Included

- Interactive virtual training led by Close Up Curriculum & Professional Development Specialists.
- Access to Close Up's *Controversial Issues in the News* digital resource library for one year.
- All materials, including a digital teacher handbook, lesson plans, and classroom materials.
- Certificate of completion eligible for 3 hours of PD credit.\*
- Tech support during the session.

### Next Steps

To learn more or to schedule professional development for your school or district, please contact a Professional Development Specialist at [classroom@closeup.org](mailto:classroom@closeup.org).

\*Please check with your school district in advance to ensure that the PD recertification credit is accepted.