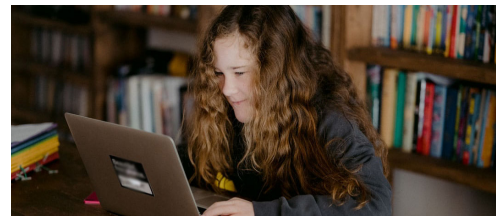


# IMPACT: CIVIC AMBASSADORS

## Program Overview



Starting in October 2022, Close Up and the National Network of Schools in Partnership will offer *IMPACT: Civic Ambassadors*. This is a special opportunity to nominate six 7th and 8th grade students to represent your school in an examination of today's most pressing issues with other students from across the country. Through this series of five online civic engagement workshops, students will build relationships, connect their experiences and personal stories to ongoing political debates and policy deliberations, and return back home to share what they have learned as civic ambassadors of their school communities.

Past civic ambassadors' actions have included facilitating issue-centered deliberations for lower grades, starting a student ambassador advisory board, and creating "lunch box talks" to allow space for difficult dialogues.

## Session Dates & Times

**Civic Ambassadors** | Tuesdays & Thursdays after school | October 18 - November 1, 2022 | 6:15-7:15pm (EST) / 3:15-4:15pm (PST)  
All sessions will take place on Zoom.

Each school will be combined with other participating schools nationwide for their discussion sessions. If you are interested in customized dates for a program that will include participants from your school only, please reach out to us at [programsupport@closeup.org](mailto:programsupport@closeup.org).

## Eligibility & Cost

This program session is exclusively for students in grades 7 and 8. You may nominate six 7th or 8th grade students to represent your school as civic ambassadors.

- **Cohort of 6 Students:** \$1,650
- **Individual Student Price:** \$275

Close Up and NNSP are deeply committed to equity and inclusion. If you require financial assistance, please email us at [programsupport@closeup.org](mailto:programsupport@closeup.org).

## Registration

To register as a **school cohort**, please [click here](#).

To register as an **individual participant**, please [click here](#).

## About Close Up

Established in 1971, [Close Up](#) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan civic education organization dedicated to helping students develop the knowledge and skills they need to become informed, active, and engaged citizens. Each year, Close Up helps thousands of students and teachers across the nation engage in civil discourse and take informed action in their communities.

## About NNSP

The [National Network of Schools in Partnership](#) (NNSP) serves its members by providing implementation support, thought leadership, and advocacy. NNSP believes collaboration and partnerships are central to a strategy for improving equity in educational opportunities. NNSP thrives on the diversity of its members, which include organizations such as: public, charter, and private schools; educational access and enrichment programs; and policy and education reform groups.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL CIVIC AMBASSADORS

## Program Syllabus



### *Session 1: Building an Inclusive Community and Exploring Perspectives*

We will begin by having students share their stories, experiences, and ideas about justice, equity, and politics through the creation of a community timeline. Students will consider how their own experiences connect to broader political, social, and economic issues in the United States. They will also consider what it means to be civic ambassadors for their schools.

### *Session 2: Understanding the Root Causes of Issues*

Students will learn how to conduct a root cause analysis of an issue to identify the real reasons why a problem exists. They will consider the symptoms of the issue and how those symptoms are present in various communities. After walking through a root cause analysis together as a whole group, students will move into small groups to apply the technique to the issues that matter most to them. They will consider the time, resources, and support needed to address both root causes and symptoms.

### *Session 3: Identifying Pathways for Creating Change*

Students will consider how they can make an impact in their communities by examining case studies of young activists. Together, they will examine multiple tactics and actions that can be used to create change, evaluating which pathways are the most effective. Students will begin to think about which actions they would be interested in and willing to take themselves.

### *Session 4: Deliberating on a Current Controversial Issue*

Students will engage in a deliberation to try to reach consensus on a current controversial issue. They will first discuss how they see the issue present in their communities, then they will review the Close Up resource they read as homework. Next, students will consider the merits of four policy proposals and deliberate on which policy or policies would be best. As a whole group, they will reflect on their policy preferences and the process of deliberation.

### *Session 5: Bringing Civic Engagement to Your Community*

Students will look back on the previous sessions to decide how they would like to share this program with their school communities. In small groups, they will discuss program components that they could lead with their peers, including:

- A community timeline
- A root cause analysis
- A case study discussion.

Students will then work through a planning guide to consider which school group they would like to involve in their chosen activity, which teachers or administrators can provide support, what they want their peers to learn from the activity, and what their next steps are for implementing it. Close Up will host an informal opportunity for students to come back together and debrief once they have led their civic engagement activities at school.