



# Professional Development

to Foster Student Engagement in a Remote and In-Person Classroom

Select all workshops in a recommended sequence, or select the one that is right for your school or district. No prerequisites required.

## Creating Democratic Classrooms

### Creating Democratic Classrooms: Building Community and Developing Empathy

Educators learn how to create a positive and inclusive learning environment where students feel empowered, safe, and challenged, and where leadership and community are practiced regularly. While remote learning creates new challenges to achieving these objectives, it also creates even more need for these kinds of connections. In this session, educators become familiar with social-emotional learning strategies informed by Action Civics pedagogy where students take ownership of their learning and engage fully as participants of a community.

### Creating Democratic Classrooms: Courageous Conversations

Controversial topics are great opportunities for learning when teachers feel comfortable navigating difficult conversations with students. Educators will be provided with facilitation tools and curricula to guide their work in navigating challenging issues and to build students' empathy, listening skills, and shared dignity in the classroom.

In addition, we will discuss how to handle students revealing personal trauma as they discuss issues and give speeches on topics of concern. This workshop can be tailored to a specific topic area such as teaching elections or talking about racism.

## Taking Informed Action through Advocacy and Electoral Participation

### Engaging Youth in Elections

Even students who are not eligible to vote can have their voices heard and learn about elections and the democratic process. Participants in this session will learn strategies to engage students in campaigns and elections by having them explore their own ideologies, learn about the candidates, explore media messages, develop their ability to be critical consumers of information, and find creative ways to get involved in the election process.

## **Amplifying Youth Voice with Project Soapbox**

Using Mikva's Project Soapbox curriculum, educators learn how to encourage students to be active and engaged citizens by speaking out on an issue that they care about. Project Soapbox provides an avenue for students to identify a passion and learn effective public speaking, listening, and empathy skills. Independent evaluations of Soapbox have demonstrated strong, positive impacts on students' civic attitudes and on social emotional skills. This workshop walks participants through the Project Soapbox process and explores options for hosting both virtual and in person Soapbox events.

## **Taking Informed Action**

Learn Mikva's best practices for youth activism. This workshop introduces participants to our Issues to Action process where students:

- Examine their personal identities and their communities from an asset based lens,
- Identify issues of importance to them,
- Conduct intensive primary research and analyze power structures,
- Develop strategies and take action to bring change,
- Showcase and celebrate their work.

## **Student Voice Committees**

Student Voice Committees are school/district based youth advisory councils that work with administration on improving the school and developing a positive culture and climate, engaging youth voice in school policy and providing strategies for youth leadership development. This workshop provides participants with a framework and strategies for establishing a Student Voice Committee (SVC) at their school, working to build a youth voice infrastructure. Workshop participants will learn how to recruit for, establish and sustain a robust SVC.

## **Teaching Across Difference**

### **Teaching Across Difference: Starting with Self**

In order for teachers to create inclusive and equitable classroom spaces, they must engage in honest self-reflection to identify who they are and how that shapes how they teach. This includes potential unconscious biases and barriers to teaching across lines of difference. During this workshop participants will conduct a self audit and examine their own implicit and explicit bias, triggers and consider how who they are impacts how they teach.

### **Teaching Across Difference: Courageous Conversations Teacher Edition**

All too often teachers focus on being teachers and don't consider their own perspectives and positionality. By engaging in courageous conversations with colleagues, participants can experience the key components necessary in civic dialogue where varying perspectives can be heard. Participants will explore the beauty in discomfort and explore perception, microaggressions and the power of language. This workshop will provide tangible strategies to make lasting changes in and around your school.

### **Teaching Across Difference: Power, Privilege, and Participation**

Identifying systems of power and privilege, power positionality is among the first steps to creating democratic classrooms. This core teacher facing workshop provides teachers with the opportunity to explore the sociopolitical context surrounding their teaching experiences to better understand their students and create spaces where every learner feels seen, heard and valued.