



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

March 18, 2014

Motion 14092

Proposed No. 2014-0068.1

**Sponsors Phillips, Hague, McDermott,
Dembowski and Upthegrove**

1 A MOTION in support of the Civics for All Initiative.

2 WHEREAS, a basic understanding of the rights and duties of citizenship are
3 essential to sustaining democracy and civic life, both nationally and in King County, and

4 WHEREAS, a national and local "civics gap" has formed and is disenfranchising
5 minority and at-risk students, especially in low-income elementary schools where math
6 and literacy test-prep pressures have made civics scarce, and

7 WHEREAS, the civics gap follows students from K-12 school into voting age
8 adulthood so that only twenty-one percent of eighteen-through-twenty-nine-year-olds
9 voted in federal elections in 2010 and far, far fewer vote in local elections, and

10 WHEREAS, the Civics for All Initiative is an independent effort, originated with
11 a group of high school students, their teacher and broad community support, that
12 proposes a specific K-12 curriculum for Seattle Public Schools, comprised of six
13 elements:

14 1. Voting and elections: hold mock elections in all schools every November,
15 with the assistance of the King County department of elections and the Secretary of State,
16 and encourage students to register family members to vote;

17 2. Social studies: require three civics classroom based assessments for each
18 grade level in order to spark civics education revitalization;

19 3. Media-literacy: promote and embed media literacy in curriculum lessons,
20 primarily in social-studies and language arts classrooms that include electoral politics and
21 current events;

22 4. Civics across the curriculum/civics across the core: promote and infuse
23 interdisciplinary civics awareness lessons and civics texts that support common core
24 literacy standards into all academic disciplines and grades when possible;

25 5. Civics website: establish and maintain a central website containing civics
26 across the curriculum where teachers can share methods and lessons that incorporate
27 civics lessons into curricula; and

28 6. Professional development: provide instructors professional development
29 training days during implementation that is dedicated to teaching civics across the K-12
30 curriculum and developing a common instructional language and framework that can
31 connect all grades, teachers and other employees to civics learning, and

32 WHEREAS, the Civics for All Initiative leadership, comprised by the executive
33 director and the board of advisors, seeks to have the six elements of the initiative
34 formally adopted by the Seattle Public school district, and

35 WHEREAS, the executive-director of the Civics for All Initiative was inspired to
36 write this initiative when the 11th graders of his winter 2011 U.S. History class returned
37 from a trip to the state capitol in Olympia and the students wrote district administrators of
38 their unforgettable experience, urging that future high school students be provided with
39 the same civic learning opportunity, and

40 WHEREAS, the Civics for All Initiative has been vetted by experts from the
41 University of Washington, Seattle University, Stanford University and the venerable
42 Center for Civics Education, and

43 WHEREAS, the Seattle city council is considering legislation to express its
44 support for the Civics for All Initiative;

45 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

46 A. The council approves of and endorses the Civics for All Initiative for its
47 potential to enhance academic achievement, civic knowledge and engagement for nearly
48 fifty thousand K-12 students in the Seattle school district by motivating and empowering
49 students with lessons that help them receive information in civic, ethical and political
50 frameworks in all academic disciplines.

51 B. The council commends King County department of elections for its interest in
52 the Civics for All Initiative and commitment to partner with the Initiative and other
53 election partners and resources, including the Secretary of State's Office in Olympia, to
54 support mock elections in public schools, which will teach children about the elections

55 process and how to vote, thus promoting civic participation in order to increase

56 citizenship involvement and aptitude for life.

57

Motion 14092 was introduced on and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 3/17/2014, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague,
Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski and Mr.
Upthegrove

No: 0

Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Phillips, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None