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**MASSACHUSETTS FY20 BUDGET INCLUDES**

**$1.5M FOR CIVICS EDUCATION**

*$1.5 million allocated to the Civics Project Trust Fund will ensure equitable and effective implementation of Massachusetts' landmark civics education law enacted in November 2018*

**CONTACT**

Arielle Jennings

ajennings@generationcitizen.org

Boston, MA, August 1, 2019 — On July 31, 2019, Governor of Massachusetts Charlie Baker approved the fiscal 2020 state budget, which includes $1.5 million for the recently established Civics Project Trust Fund. This represents an unprecedented public commitment to civics education, providing essential support for the Commonwealth’s [civics education law](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/190/S2631) that was enacted in November 2018. The Trust Fund, established under the civics law, Chapter 296, that has set a new standard for the nation, will help to ensure that every student in the state receives a high quality civics education that will equip them with the skills, knowledge, and experiences to become informed active participants in civic life. The Fund is modeled after those proven successful in other states and is to be administered by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.

This significant allocation to the Civics Project Trust Fund will provide much needed support for professional development for teachers, prioritizing underserved communities in “school districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students.” This first year of funding will allow for the equitable and effective implementation of the civics education law, which**:**

* Requires that all public schools teach American history and civics education.
* Requires that all public schools provide students at the eighth grade and high school levels with no less than one student-led civics project.
* Includes provisions to encourage voter registration and create opportunities for other vital forms of civic engagement.

“There is a tremendous need for schools to educate students on American history and civics. The student-led civics projects will encourage teens to be engaged in their community and will shape future involved citizens,” said Cassandra Dasco a rising Sophomore at Hingham High School.

The [Massachusetts Civic Learning Coalition](http://macivicsforall.org) (MCLC), a group of civics education organizations, research institutions, school districts, and stakeholders committed to improving the quality and implementation of K-12 civics education for students across the state, worked closely with lawmakers in advocating for the funds to be included in the state budget. Members of the coalition include: The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Foundation, Generation Citizen Massachusetts, iCivics, the League of Women Voters Massachusetts, Engage, Tisch College of Civic Life at Tufts University, Facing History and Ourselves, Edward M. Kennedy Institute, Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard University, Collaborative for Educational Services, The Boston Foundation, UTEC, We The People, Massachusetts Center for Civic Education, Discovering Justice, Youth on Board, NNHS Center for Civic Engagement and Service and others committed to civics education reform.

Arielle Jennings, Massachusetts Executive Director of Generation Citizen said, “We know that without sufficient funding, this groundbreaking civics education law cannot be effectively implemented. We are thrilled that, in particular, this $1.5 million commitment from our government will ensure that the low-income communities who stand to benefit from the robust civics education promised in the law the most, indeed will.”

“The creation of the Civics Project Trust Fund is a major step toward giving teachers the support they need to make sure that all students in the Commonwealth receive the highest quality of civic education in the nation. We thank the legislature and Governor Baker for their leadership in making the Trust Fund a reality,” Louise Dubé, the executive director of iCivics, said.

 “Teacher training is critical to ensure teachers throughout the Commonwealth are prepared to lead effective civics education lessons for the one millions students,” said Steven M. Rothstein, John F. Kennedy Library Foundation’s executive director.

Numerous legislative champions including State Senator Chandler, Senator Lesser, Speaker DeLeo, Representative Vargas and Representative Campbell who were the original authors of Chapter 296 which established the Civics Project Trust Fund, worked to ensure the allocation of the funding Their efforts, first to enact the new law, one of the most robust laws of its kind in the nation, and now to ensure funding for implementation reflect a clear commitment to equitable access to high quality civic education for all students.

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**About The Massachusetts Civic Learning Coalition**

The Massachusetts Civic Learning Coalition is composed of civics education nonprofits, school districts, research institutions, and stakeholders invested in what students are learning about how government operates and encouraging students to become more active in their society.