

Students Speak Out: Students Influencing Policymaking

You've decided that authentic student voices should influence your work. Let the Citizens League help you how to get right to it.

Students Speak Out is a civic engagement process carried out on Citizens League's own software platform, CitiZing. Students work constructively with adults to practice democracy. They co-define problems, co-create solutions, and inform policy design and improvement. Behind-the-site strategies make the platform come alive.

Citizens League offers consultants who come prepared to customize a package of SSO processes and tools that work for you and your budget to get the input you desire from students. We offer:

- ***Appealing and functional social networking platform for facilitating community work.***
- ***Project design—strategy and planning to meet goals.***
Strategies include: commentator series, workshops, issue-based leadership projects, and video contest. We also have processes for recruiting, incenting participation, fostering constructive dialogue, training adult participants, and more.
- ***Project management.***
- ***Information synthesizing for relevance to policy and practice.***
- ***Skilled community facilitation targeted to adults and students to increase transparency, shared learning, and the potential for take-up of outcomes.***
- ***General content moderation to keep the space safe, student-friendly, and one that adults will take seriously.***
- ***Rooted in our experience, advice about what to expect; about what we've learned.***

What can adults learn by asking young people to document the impact of policies & programs on StudentsSpeakOut.org?

Students' knowledge and experiences can raise new questions about the impact of policy research & design:

"The problem with *No Child Left Behind* is that it's turning into—and probably already has—No Child Allowed In Front. The standards are a pain in the butt for both teachers and students. It's holding students back while looking good and appealing to the parents. Not good at all."

Students can help us think about new and different solutions for public problems:

Re: alternatives to suspensions: "Do in-school suspensions instead so that students stay in school and get some of their work done."

Students learn there is public value for their involvement, and get involved elsewhere:

"Students Speak Out has helped me open up and speak out. I never thought I would be able to speak in front of all my teachers and about 150 more."

See "archives" and "findings" at StudentsSpeakOut.org for documents explaining what young people are teaching us!

For more information about these strategies and our outcomes, contact:

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We invite you to see what students have achieved:

StudentsSpeakOut.org