

Instructional Goals

The classroom resources and professional development activities developed as part of ***Democracy It Is!*** will meet the following goals:

- Assist all students in the process of creating shared understandings of the ideas, core principles, and concepts inherent in the evolving democratic ideals upon which the United States was founded. Active participation in this process will enable students to develop the necessary vocabulary with which to engage in civic discourse. We know that students will make meanings based upon their own rich and diverse backgrounds.
- Introduce, model, and foster a commitment to these fundamental principles and concepts: life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, common good, justice, equality, diversity, truth, popular sovereignty, and patriotism, as described on pages 258–259 of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s (DPI) *Planning Curriculum in Social Studies*, Bulletin No. 1218, 2001.
- Model how all who are directly involved in school, including young people, participate in diverse learning communities that engage in cooperative, collaborative planning to make and enact decisions in response to the concerns, aspirations, and interests of all. These materials ultimately will extend the values of democracy and challenge the conditions that create social inequities.
- Provide access to a wide range of information about the people, history, traditions, government, documents, civic institutions, organizations, political processes, issues, and events that have shaped and continue to shape students’ lives in particular, and democratic life in general, at the classroom, school, community, local, county, state, tribal, and national levels.
- Provide authentic, inquiry-based, engaging, and increasingly complex activities that require the construction of knowledge and development of critical skills with which to participate effectively in democratic life, both as an individual and as a member of various groups, as well as at classroom, school, community, local, county, state, tribal, and national levels.
- Model and nurture respect for diverse individuals, groups, cultures, and ideas; foster a lifelong active commitment to democratic principles; and empower participation and social activism in civic life.
- Address, explore, and mediate problems inherent in the methodologies of service-learning, multicultural education, and democratic education; and model techniques for avoiding indoctrination and marginalization of students throughout the education process.
- Provide opportunities for educators to develop democratic education ideologies and skills, and to make effective use of Wisconsin’s Democracy Education curricular materials in coordination with DPI’s *PI-34 Wisconsin Standards for Teacher Development and Licensure*:

Democracy It Is!

PI 34.02 Teacher Standards. To receive a license to teach in Wisconsin, an applicant shall complete an approved program and demonstrate proficient performance in the knowledge, skills and dispositions under all of the following standards:

- (1)** The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for pupils.
- (2)** The teacher understands how children with broad ranges of ability learn and provides instruction that supports their intellectual, social, and personal development.
- (3)** The teacher understands how pupils differ in their approaches to learning and the barriers that impede learning and can adapt instruction to meet the diverse needs of pupils, including those with disabilities and exceptionalities.
- (4)** The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies, including the use of technology to encourage children's development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
- (5)** The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- (6)** The teacher uses effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques as well as instructional media and technology to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- (7)** The teacher organizes and plans systematic instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, pupils, the community, and curriculum goals.
- (8)** The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the pupil.
- (9)** The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effect of his or her choices and actions on pupils, parents, professionals in the learning community and others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
- (10)** The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support pupil learning and well being and who acts with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.