

Civic Education Survey Report Summer 2004

Created by The Florida Law Related Education Association Inc.

Civic Education Survey Report

Summer 2004



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Introduction

This report was generated for the purpose of determining the status of civic education as being taught in the state of Florida. As made clear by voter turnout, the young people of our country and our state are not taking their place as active participants within our government. In the presidential election of 2000, 32.3% of 18-21 year olds voted. This percentage is down from 42.8% just 8 years before. Figure 1.1 demonstrates the steady decline in turnout in presidential races. Figure 1.2 demonstrates the fall-off of voter turnout in midterm elections.

With voter turnout decrease at an alarming rate, it is necessary to assess the status of civic education in our schools. In order to obtain this information, phone calls were made to all 67 districts in Florida. Currently, 55 districts have responded as of this date. In each county, the social studies coordinator or an equivalent position was contacted and given a set of questions. The results are demonstrated through graphs and charts found on the following pages.

Figure 1.1 National Turnout for voters aged 18-21 in presidential elections

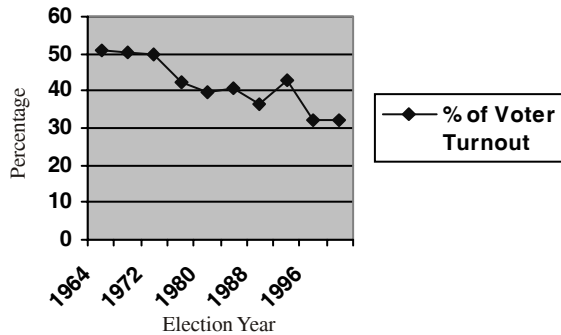
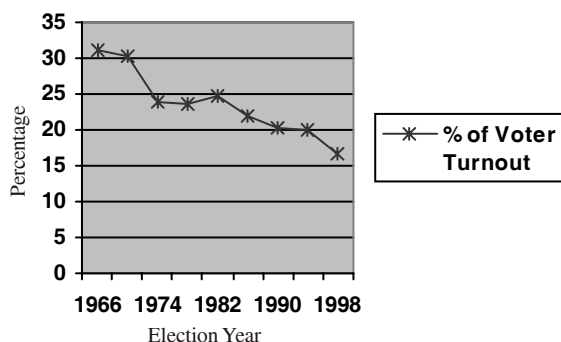


Figure 1.2



Note: The national voting statistics above were retrieved from the U.S. Census Bureau website at the following address: <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/voting/tabA-1.pdf>

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The Instrument

1 Civic and Law Education District Inventory

Civic and Law Education District Inventory

District/County:

Contact:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Email:

- 1.) What grade does your district offer the required American Government Course?
- 2.) Does your district offer a Civics Course?
- 3.) Do you offer any law courses in high school?
- 4.) Do you have any law magnets or law/criminal justice academies in your districts?
- 5.) Are you familiar with the free We the People... the Citizen and the Constitution curriculum?
- 6.) At the middle school level, do you offer any civics, government, or law classes?
- 7.) Are there any other related courses in your curriculum?
- 8.) Do you have any district requirements for civics and government beyond the state requirements?

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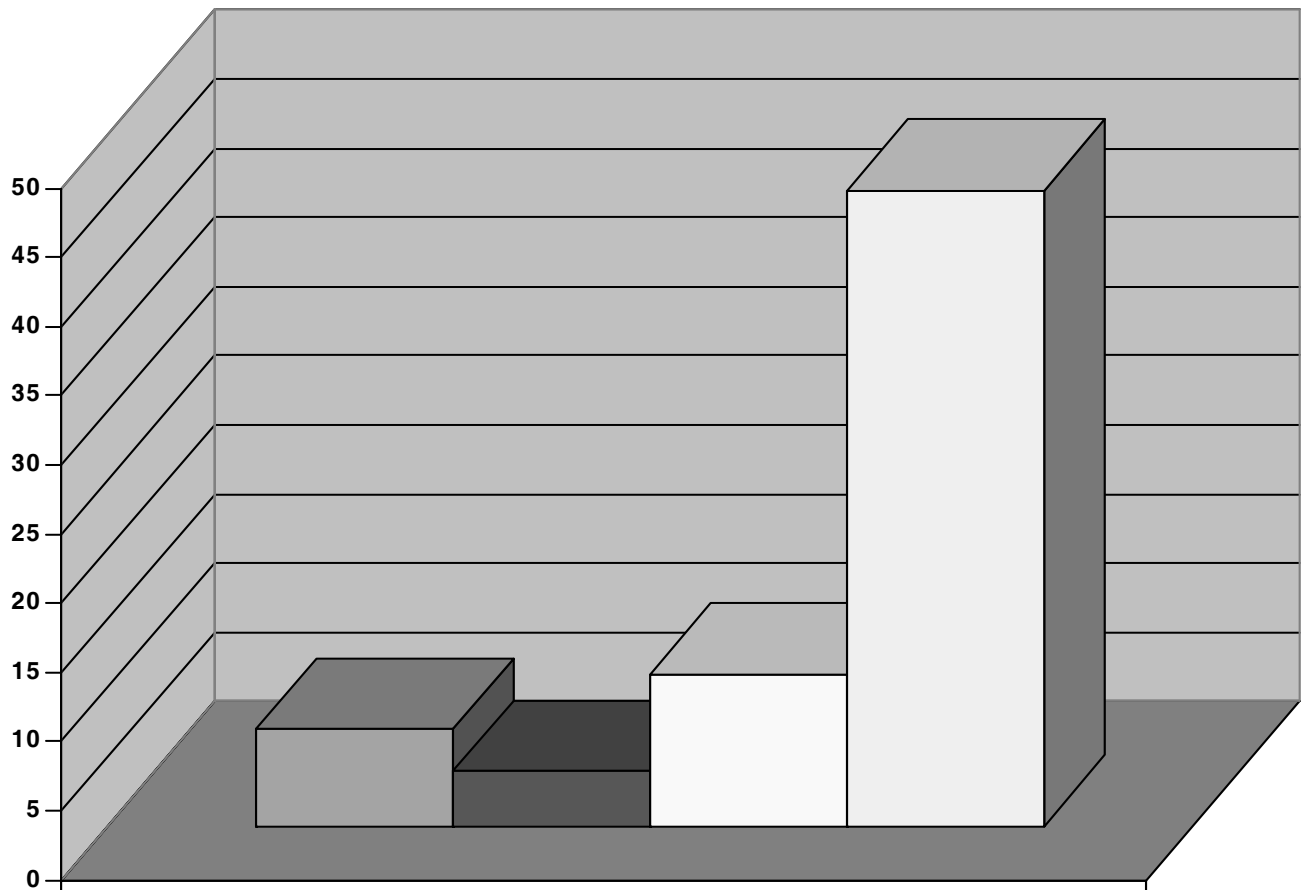
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Results

1 American Government in High Schools

At what grade level does your county offer American Government?

(Note: The responses often included multiple grades)



American Government (N=)

9th Grade	7
10th Grade	4
11th Grade	11
12th Grade	46

**The majority of school districts offer the 1/2 credit required
Government course at 12th grade.**

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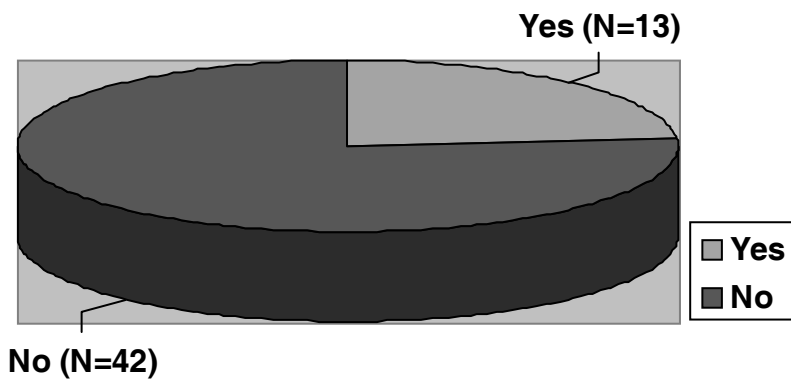


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Results

2 Civics Course

Does your county offer a civics course in any grade?



Counties Offering Civics	Grade Level Offered
Dade	Middle and High School
Duval	High School
Franklin	7th, 8th, 9th
Holmes	9th
Jackson	9th
Jefferson	High School
Lafayette	12th
Lee	High School
Manatee	High School
Orange	9th
Sarasota	High School
Union	High School
Washington	8th

At the time of this survey, 13 districts offered either a middle school or high school civics course. Dade county has a required, year-long middle school course.

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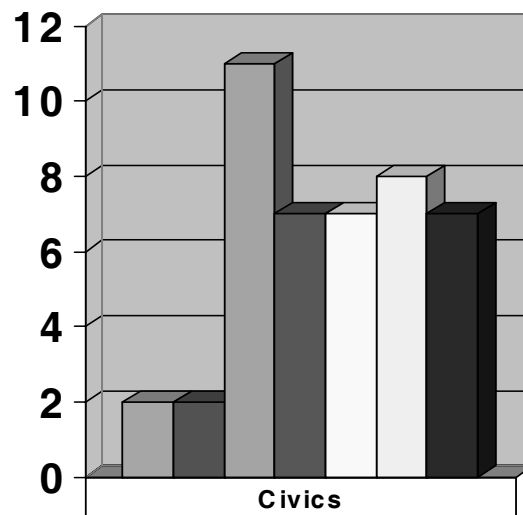
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Results

2 Civics Course (cont'd) Special information for the civics courses that are offered.

What grade level do you offer your civics course?

(Note: The responses on this graph include multiple grade levels)



	Civics
7th Grade (N=#)	2
8th Grade (N=#)	2
9th Grade (N=#)	11
10th Grade (N=#)	7
11th Grade (N=#)	7
12th Grade (N=#)	8
Any Grade (High School Elective) (N=#)	7

7th Grade (N=#)
8th Grade (N=#)
9th Grade (N=#)
10th Grade (N=#)
11th Grade (N=#)
12th Grade (N=#)
Any Grade (High School Elective) (N=#)

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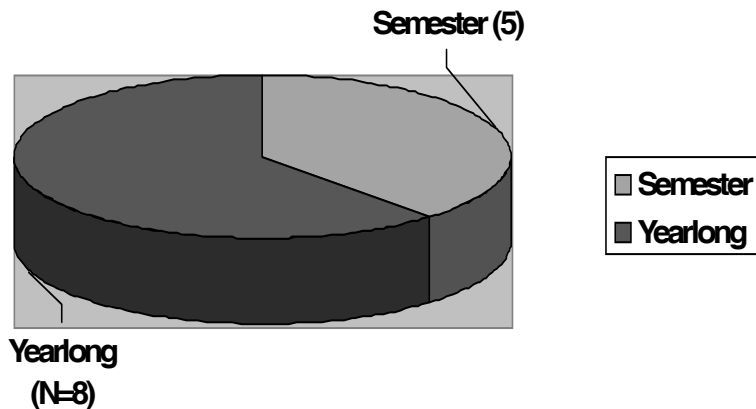


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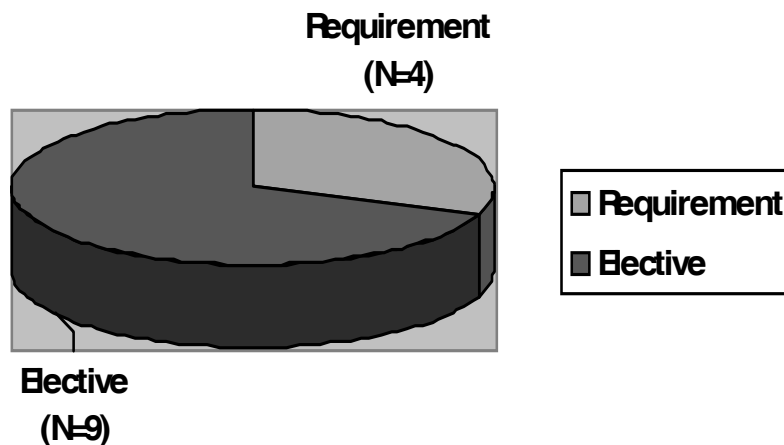
Results

2 Civics Course (cont'd) Special information for the civics courses that are offered.

Is your civics course a year-long course or a semester-long?



Is your civics course a requirement or an elective?



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Results

2 Civics Course (cont'd) Special information for the civics courses that are offered.

<u>County</u>	<u>Grade Level Offered</u>	<u>Requirement/Elective</u>	<u>Year/Semester</u>
Dade	High/Middle School	Elective/Required	Semester/Year
Duval	High School	Elective	Semester
Franklin	7th, 8th, 9th	Elective	Semester
Holmes	9th	Requirement	Yearlong
Jackson	9th	Elective	Semester
Jefferson	High School	Requirement	Yearlong
LaFayette	12th	Requirement	Yearlong
Lee	High School	Elective	Semester
Manatee	High School	Elective	Semester
Orange	9th	Elective	Yearlong
Sarasota	High School	Elective	Semester
Union	High School	Elective	Semester
Washington	8th	Requirement	Yearlong

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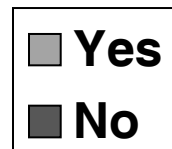
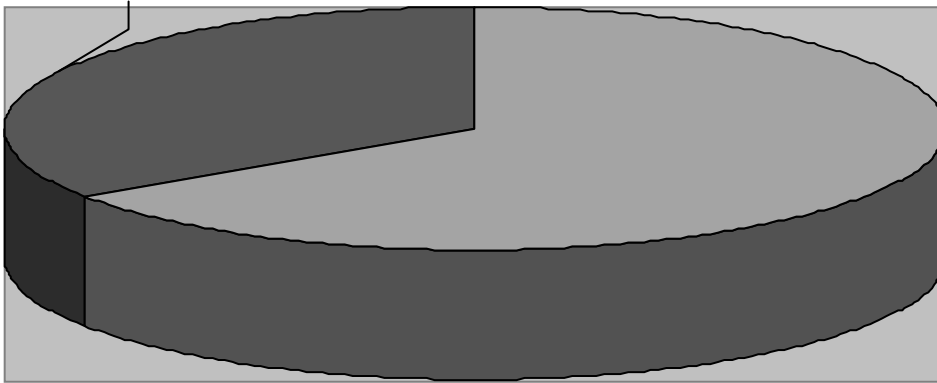
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Results

3 Law Courses

Does your county offer any law courses in high school?

No (N=19)



Yes (N=36)

At the time of this survey, thirty-six counties offered law electives at the high school level.

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Results

3 Law Courses (cont'd)

County	Courses Offered
Alachua	Law Studies
Baker	Criminal Justice I, II, III
Bay	Law Studies
Brevard	Law Studies, Comprehensive Law Studies
Broward	Courtroom Procedures, Legal Issues, Comprehensive Law Studies
Charlotte	Comprehensive Law Studies, Legal Procedures, Courtroom Procedures
Citrus	Law Studies
Clay	Law Studies
Collier	Everything in the Course Code Directory
Columbia	Criminal Justice I, II, III
Dade	Everything in the Course Code Directory
Duval	Law Studies
Escambia	Comprehensive Law Studies, Law Studies, Political Science, Constitutional Law
Hernando	Law Studies
Hillsborough	Law Studies, Courtroom Procedures, Legal Issues
Indian River	Law Studies
Jackson	Law Studies
Lake	Law Studies
Lee	Law Studies
Leon	Law Studies
Levy	Criminal Justice
Madison	Law Studies
Manatee	Law Studies, Legal Issues, Courtroom Procedures
Marion	Law Studies
Monroe	Law Studies
Okeechobee	Law Studies
Orange	Law Studies
Palm Beach	Law Studies
Pasco	Law Studies, Courtroom Procedures
Pinellas	Law Studies
Santa Rosa	Comprehensive Law Studies, Courtroom Procedures
Sarasota	Everything in the Course Code Directory
Seminole	Law Studies
Volusia	Law Studies, Comprehensive Law Studies
Wakula	Law Studies
Walton	Law Studies

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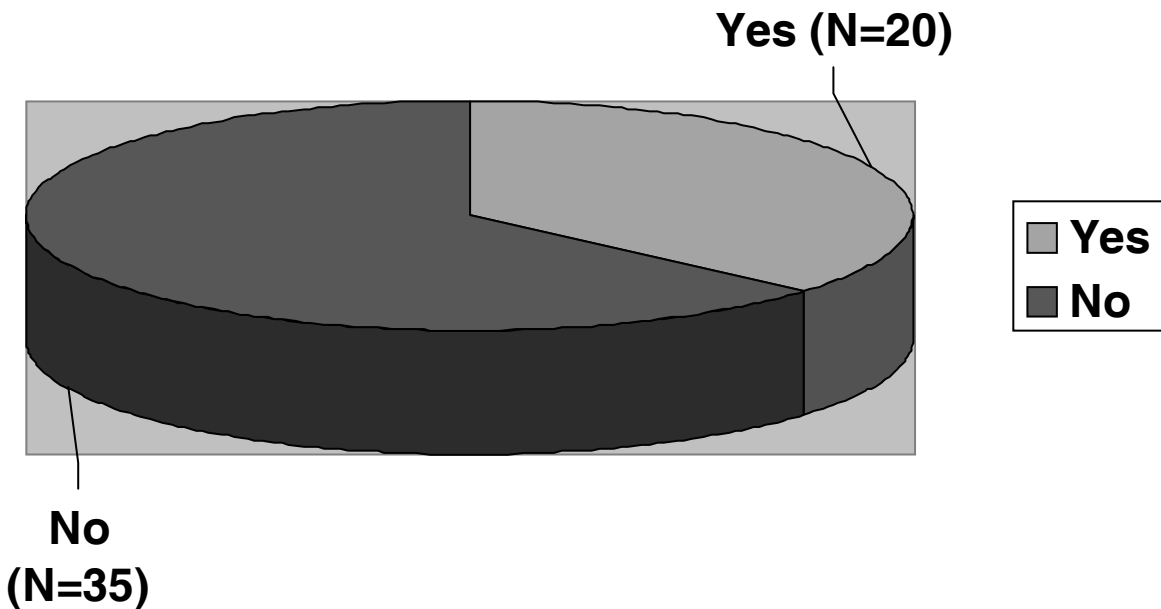


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Results

4 Law Magnets

Does your county have any law related magnet schools?



At the time of this survey, twenty districts reported having approximately thirty law related magnets or academies

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Results

4 Law Magnets (cont'd)

County	Magnet School(s)
Alachua	Newberry High School
Baker	Baker County High School
Bay	Mosely High School, Bay High School
Brevard	Palm Bay High School
Broward	Ft. Lauderdale High School, Dandy Middle School
Clay	Clay High School
Collier	Lely High School, Gulf Coast High School
Dade	Miami Carol City High School, Michael Krop High School, Miami Senior High
Duval	Wilson High School, Andrew Jackson High School
Escambia	Woodham High School
Gilchrist	Bell High School
Hillsborough	Jefferson High School
Orange	Boone High School, West Orange High School, University High School
Palm Beach	Palm Beach Lakes High School, Lake Worth High School
Pinellas	Pinellas Park High School
Polk	Kathleen High School
Sarasota	Booker High School, Pinecrest High School
Volusia	Atlantic High School
Wakula	Wakula High School

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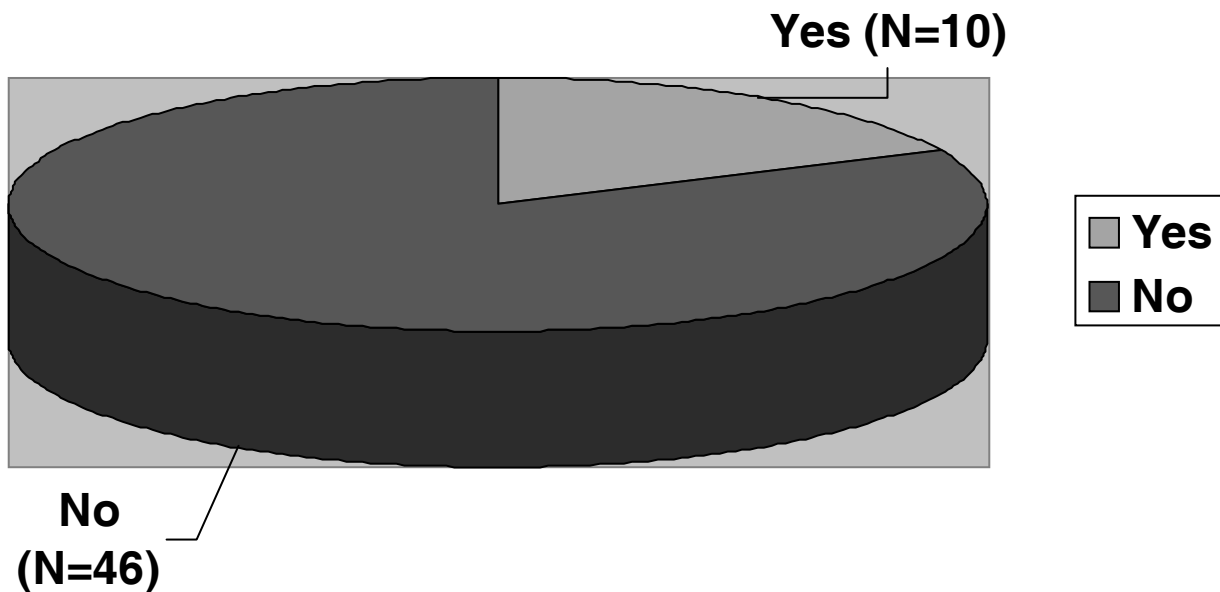


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Results

5 Graduation Requirements

Does your county have any graduation requirements for civics or government that go beyond the state requirements?



County	Extra Requirement
Clay	World History(10th grade), American History(11th grade), Economics/American Government(12th)
Dade	Community Service
Franklin	World History(10th grade), American History(11th grade), Economics/American Government(12th)
Holmes	Civics(9th grade)
Indian River	World History(10th grade), American History(11th grade), Economics/American Government(12th)
Jefferson	Civics(9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th)
Lafayette	Civics(12th)
Monroe	Law Studies(12th)
Osceola	World History(10th grade), American History(11th grade), Economics/American Government(12th)
Santa Rosa	World History(10th grade), American History(11th grade), Economics/American Government(12th)

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Analysis

1 The Condition of Civic Education in Florida

In Florida, the presence of civic education is felt primarily in two courses: American Government and Civics. In addressing the less frequent of the two, Civics as a course is rarely seen in Florida. As Figure 2.1 indicates, there are only three counties that require civics to be taught. The other ten that offer civics represent a considerable minority of the counties in Florida. Unfortunately no other counties have reported teaching this course in the last year.

The reasons offered as to why these courses have not been offered include a lack of funding and no room in the curriculum. With all of these problems obstructing the advancement of a course dedicated to teaching children to function in a democratic society, all of the weight in the other 55 counties is shifted to their American Government course.

American Government, which is taught in one semester, aims to teach students about the structure and function of government, the foundations of the American democracy. The Sunshine State Standards provide content direction for this course. Florida required instruction statute states that schools must teach federal, state, and local government.

This report will be updated annually to serve as an indicator of the practices of local school districts in the area of civic education.

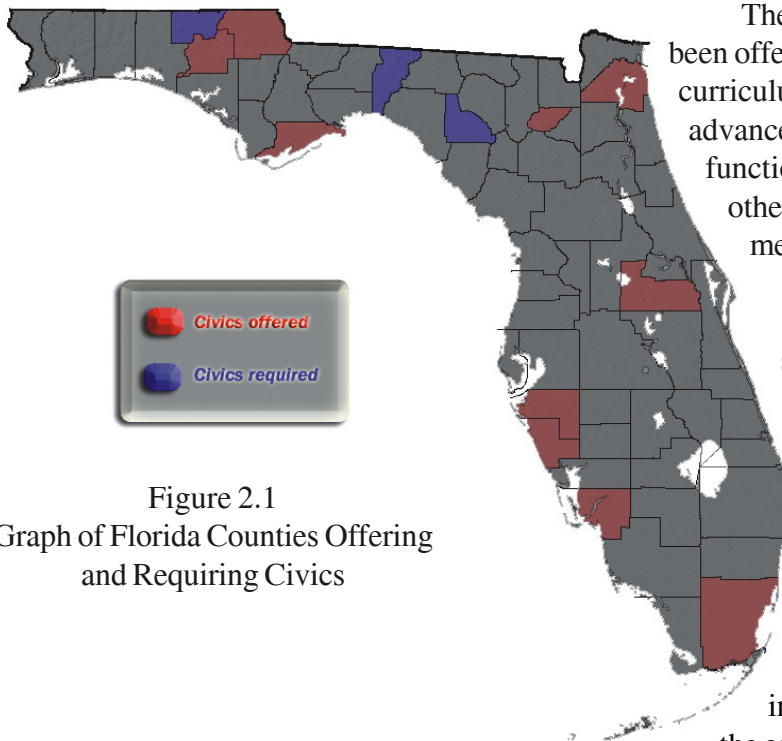


Figure 2.1
Graph of Florida Counties Offering
and Requiring Civics

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Anaylsis

1 The Condition of Civic Education in Florida