

IMPACT: ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM OVERVIEW



Never has there been a more important time for young people to connect across distance and divides, engage with diverse perspectives, and understand pressing global issues. During the 2021-2022 school year, Close Up and the National Network of Schools in Partnership (NNSP) will bring together middle school students from around the country to build inclusive communities, develop the skills needed for active citizenship, and learn from the stories, the successes, and the setbacks of other young change-makers. By engaging young people from communities nationwide in meaningful dialogue, we aim to help students develop empathy for the perspectives of others and build the skills and confidence needed to empower a generation of change-makers.

Program Objectives

- Practice communication and cooperation in diverse groups in order to understand multiple perspectives.
- Participate in a root cause analysis of issues in order to understand that problems facing our communities are complex but solvable.
- Learn from the stories, the successes, and the setbacks of other young change-makers.
- Understand and discuss complex issues and increase their sense of political efficacy and empowerment.

2021-2022 Impact Programs

Civic Ambassadors Program (8th Grade)

Six online synchronous 60-minute sessions starting October 26, 2021

The Civic Ambassadors program is a series of six online civic engagement workshops, students will build relationships, connect their experiences and personal stories to ongoing political debates and policy deliberations, and return back home to share what they have learned as civic ambassadors of their school communities. *Past civic ambassadors' actions have included facilitating issue-centered deliberations for lower grades, starting a student ambassador advisory board, and creating "lunch box talks" to allow space for difficult dialogues.*

Civic Leaders Program (6th and 7th Grade)

Four online synchronous 60-minute sessions starting January 25, 2022

The Civic Leaders program helps middle school students build the foundational skills for active and engaged citizenship. Students will share their stories, experiences, and ideas through the creation of a community timeline; learn about neighborhoods and the systems that are in place to support community members and how those systems can lead to inequity and opportunity gaps; and consider how people make an impact by examining case studies of young activists who have affected change in their communities. Through these workshops, students will learn that there are many pathways to change, and consider what strategies they might use to address an issue they care about in their own local community.

National Youth Summit (Rising 8th and 9th graders)

Four-day in-person, Washington, DC, summer 2022

The four-day Youth Summit equips students with the tools and knowledge they need to become catalysts for change. Students will network with diverse peers nationwide, hear inspiring stories from young activists about models of advocacy and activism, enhance their understanding of community issues and root causes, evaluate proposals that represent a range of viewpoints, and consider, as a group, how to best address those issues.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM DETAILS

Program Eligibility

The Civic Ambassadors program is open to 8th grade students and the Civic Leaders program is designed for 6th and 7th graders. Each school will have an opportunity to nominate a cohort of six students per program to represent their school in an examination of today's most pressing issues with students from across the country.

In order to be eligible for the National Youth Summit in Washington, DC, students must attend at least one of the online sessions and be a rising 8th or rising 9th grader.

If you are interested in custom dates for an entire grade or course, please email us at programsupport@closeup.org.

Program Dates & Cost

Civic Ambassadors Program

Tuesdays & Thursdays after school | October 26 - November 9, 2021 | 6:15-7:15pm (EST) / 3:15-4:15pm (PST)

On Tuesday, December 14, 2021, a final reflection and debrief will take place following student facilitated discussions at their schools.

- **Cohort of 6 Students:** \$1200 (Close Up & NNSP Member Price)
- **Individual Student Price:** \$250

Civic Leaders Program

Tuesdays & Thursdays after school | January 25-February 3, 2022 | 6:15-7:15pm (EST) / 3:15-4:15pm (PST)

- **Cohort of 6 Students:** \$1200 (Close Up & NNSP Member Price)
- **Individual Student Price:** \$250

Four-Day National Youth Summit

Summer 2022! Dates coming soon.

- Approximately \$1600 + Airfare per student

Close Up and NNSP are deeply committed to equity and inclusion. If you require financial assistance, please contact Close Up at programsupport@closeup.org.

Registration

To register, please visit our [website](#).

About Close Up

Established in 1971, [Close Up](#) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan civic education organization dedicated to helping students develop the knowledge and skills they need to become informed, active, and engaged citizens. Each year, Close Up helps thousands of students and teachers across the nation engage in civil discourse and take informed action in their communities.

About NNSP

The [National Network of Schools in Partnership](#) (NNSP) serves its members by providing implementation support, thought leadership, and advocacy. NNSP believes collaboration and partnerships are central to a strategy for improving equity in educational opportunities. NNSP thrives on the diversity of its members, which include organizations such as: public, charter and private schools; educational access and enrichment programs; and policy and education reform groups.