

# INCREASING CIVIC PARTICIPATION AMONG ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

## PURPOSE OF THIS ACTION PLAN

This action plan highlights ways to increase civic participation among English Language Learners (ELL) and provides ideas for activities to include in your classes as well as resources to help engage students.

### STEP 1: INCREASING CIVIC AWARENESS AMONG STUDENTS

1. To start, you can share information in class about U.S. history and civics.

Here are resources you can use in your classes:

- Teaching Resources from U.S. Immigration and Citizenship Services:  
<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/teachers/lesson-plans-and-activities>
- Teaching Resources from the **Zinn Education Project** can be found here:  
<https://zinnedproject.org/teaching-materials/>
- **The Community Member Role Map** has ideas for activities to teach students more about civics in the U.S.  
[http://eff.clee.utk.edu/fundamentals/role\\_map\\_ccm.htm](http://eff.clee.utk.edu/fundamentals/role_map_ccm.htm)

2. You can also provide information about how the immigration system works as well as information on the education, health care, economic support, and your local housing systems.

- **National Immigration Law Center (NILC) Resources on Health Care Systems:**  
<https://www.nilc.org/issues/health-care/>
- **NILC Resources on Economic Support:**  
<https://www.nilc.org/issues/economic-support/>
- **NILC Resources on Education:**  
<https://www.nilc.org/issues/education/>

### STEP 2: FOSTERING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AMONG STUDENTS

1. You can include Know Your Rights trainings as part of your classes.

Here are some helpful resources:

- **National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA) Resources:**  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B6ryFgLxVYnSzRsYVBTdmtWUG8>
- **National Immigration Law Center Know Your Rights Material:**  
<https://www.nilc.org/issues/immigration-enforcement/everyone-has-certain-basic-rights/>

## STEP 2: FOSTERING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AMONG STUDENTS CONTINUED

- **United We Dream’s KYR material:**

<http://unitedwedream.org/thank-deportation-defense-card-handy-phone/>

and at **Informedimmigrant.com**

- **More printable KYR Cards available here:**

<http://www.ciyja.org/fighticeraidswithpowernotpanic>

- You can discuss creating family preparedness plans, which helps families plan in the unlikely event of an emergency. For more information about family preparedness plans and sample forms Immigrant Legal Resource Center has excellent resources and sample forms families can complete: [https://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/family\\_preparedness\\_plan.pdf](https://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/family_preparedness_plan.pdf)

2. You can spend time each week in class discussing an organizing activity.

- In addition to sharing information about your organization’s campaigns, here is more information on advocacy campaigns happening around the country: <https://www.informedimmigrant.com/resources/>
- Here is a great resource for those who may be new to organizing: <http://mijente.net/2017/02/10/community-defense-zone-guide/1486781486863-3595ecdb-6c6d>

3. You can also spend time each week sharing information about relevant policies your organizations is organizing for or against.

- These websites provide excellent resources for policy advocacy work:  
[www.nilc.org](http://www.nilc.org)  
<https://americanimmigrationcouncil.org>  
<http://americasvoice.org/>

4. You can invite a local elected official to speak to your class.

5. You can work with your students to write their personal story.

## STEP 3: ENGAGING STUDENTS IN ADVOCACY

1. You can develop an organizing campaign in your class.

Your campaign plan should address the following:

- a. Identify the problem
- b. Set SMART goals: Specific, Measureable, Agreed upon, Realistic and Time-Based
- c. Identify Targets
- d. Set Tactics and Activities
- e. Make a Timeline
- f. Make a Plan to Track your Progress

### STEP 3: ENGAGING STUDENTS IN ADVOCACY CONTINUED

2. Your students can practice English by calling their member of Congress or state or local officials and reading a script asking for specific action during class.

- You can find your Member of Congress' contact information here:

[www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

[www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

or by typing in your zip code and state here:

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>

- Tips for Calling Your Elected Official:

- State your full name and your zip code so they know you are a constituent who lives in their district
- Tell the person who answers the phone that you would like the member of Congress to speak out against the Trump administration's aggressive enforcement policy. Ask your member of Congress to make a public statement in support of the need for Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation.
- Keep it simple and from the heart.
- Sample Script: "Hello, I am calling to ask Representative/Senator \_\_\_\_\_ to speak out publicly against the Department of Homeland Security's aggressive enforcement policy. We need humane immigration reform, not more deportations."

3. Students can send postcards written in English to Members of Congress and the White House.

4. You can invite students to participate in Lobby Days organized by your organization.

5. You can also invite students to participate in movement-building trainings or other advocacy trainings your organization hosts.