



EURASIA
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The Impact of Civic Education on Schools, Students and Communities

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October 11, 2008

Budapest, Hungary

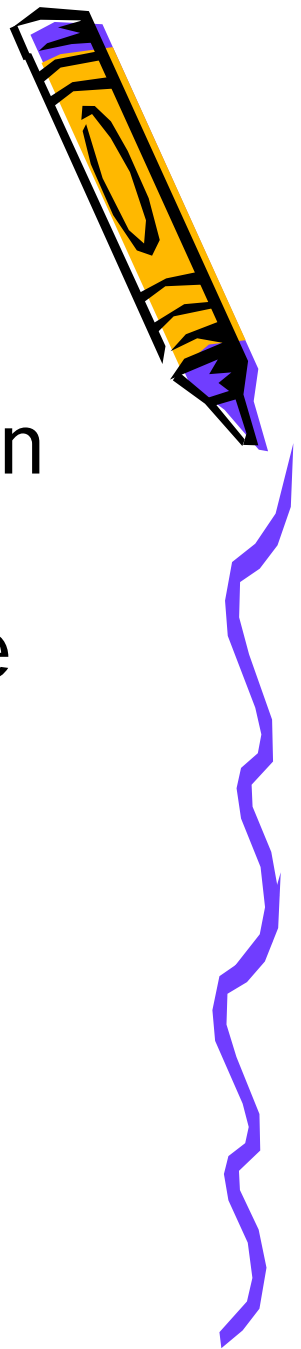
9th ISSA Annual Conference

Active Citizenship:

Democratic Practices in Education

The purpose of this research project

- is to explore whether the Armenian civic education curriculum implementation corresponds to the goals and objectives of the Social Studies curriculum; and education reforms in Armenia.

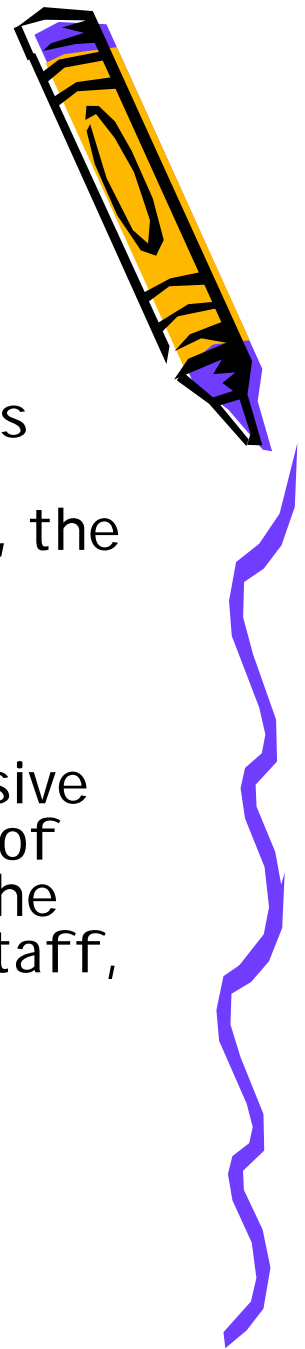


The aim of this research project is to:

- a. explore the degree to which the Armenian Civic Education standards incorporate to the international standards of civic education,
- b. discover the effect of civic education on students, teachers, and other community members, the progress of the school-community relationship and integration,
- c. examine students' active participation skills and the conditions for effective learning .



The preliminary hypothesis



- The National Curriculum on Civics/Social Studies is mainly based on the educational theory and is congruent to the international practice. Moreover, the Curriculum takes into account the national characteristics of the Armenian culture.
- Although, the National Curriculum is a comprehensive document, it is hard to meet all the requirements of the document in the implementation phases with the available resources, teaching and administrating staff, and educational authorities.



Basic assumption

- The education system should address the societal changes in the school curriculum and prepare citizens with new knowledge, skills, values and dispositions.



Reforms



- *"Education Quality and Relevance"* - deals with the global developments and actual problems facing the education system after the collapse of the former Soviet Union - 1998
- *Free public education by the Armenian Constitution* - 2003
- *Strategic Mission of Education in Armenia (National Plan for Education Development)* - 2007
- *The National Curriculum for General Education*-2004
- *The State Standard for Secondary Education*- 2004
- *National Program and Standards for Social Studies* - 2006
- *Education Transformation in Armenia* - 2007





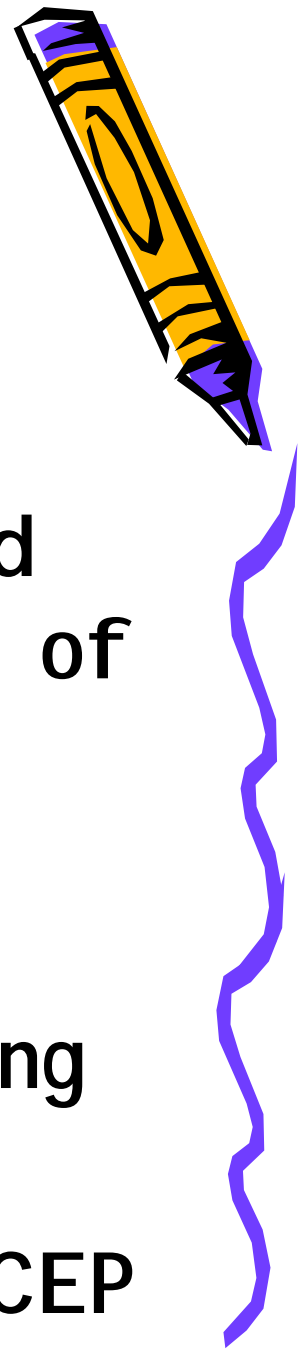
- The main goal of the **general education** is the comprehensive and harmonized development of the mental, spiritual, physical and social abilities of the children and learners, and the formation of their adequate good habits of conduct and behaviour.



The Major Features According to the National Curriculum for General Education- NCGE

- Education should be based on universal human rights, needs and interests of students, protection of the national identity, school autonomy, contemporary achievements of pedagogy and psychology, integration of teaching and learning

CEP



Persistent problems hindering student learning at schools were identified:



- severe and excessive academic curriculum;
- lack of interactive teaching in schools and individualized approach to the children;
- too much importance currently is given to the communication of information to the learner and the requirement for factual memorisation;
- the curriculum and syllabuses were highly didactic and relied upon the role of the teacher and the textbooks as the only source of all knowledge;
- specified content requirements tended to be too sophisticated and high level and were oriented towards elite students;
- inadequate parental involvement;
- ineffective pedagogical cadres and teaching materials



almost all state governed educational institutions lacked the principles of democracy and decision making



The Aim of Strategic Mission of Education in Armenia

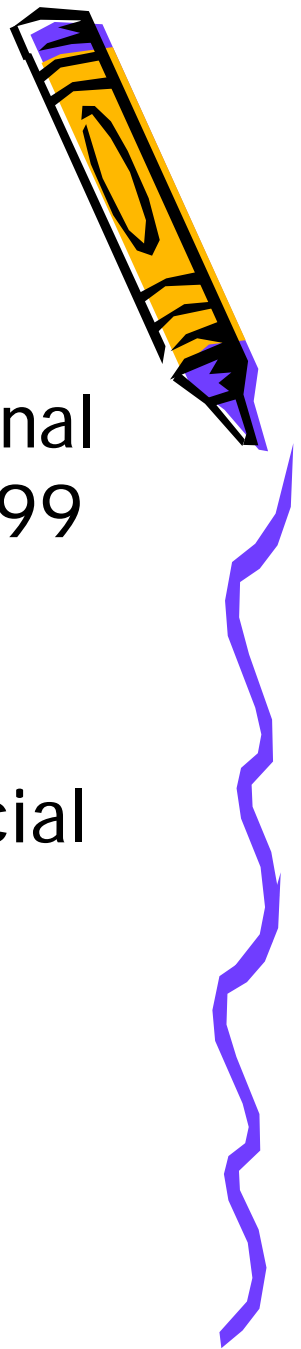


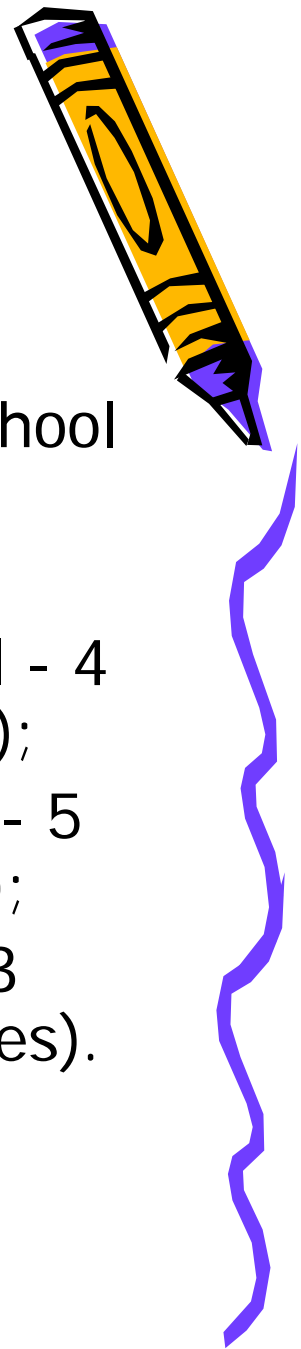
- supporting the sustainable economic development,
- promoting international and regional cooperation,
- strengthening country's independence and developing civil society,
- promoting common good and well-being, and alleviating poverty (MoES, 2007)



First Major Steps

- Emergence of Civics course in the National Curriculum as a mandatory subject – 1999
- Introduction of the National Curriculum for General Education that included Social Sciences as a separate discipline- 2004





Three-level general educational system

Before 2006-2007
school year – 10 years

- a) Primary school PS - 3 years (1-3 grades);
- b) Middle school MS - 5 years (4-8 grades);
- c) High school HS - 2 years (9-10 grades).

After 2006-2007 school
year - 12 years

- a) Primary school - 4 years (1-4 grades);
- b) Middle school - 5 years (5-9 grades);
- c) High school - 3 years (10-12 grades).



Education Quality and Relevance

- Decentralization of management (school boards)
- Per capita lump sum financing system
- Education content reform to increase the quality of teaching and learning



Education quality and relevance cont...



- Development and introduction of a new General Education Curriculum Framework, subject syllabuses and assessment system
- Introduction of ICT in general education system
- Teacher professional development
- Management of general education system



Civics and Social Studies in the National Curriculum



Before 2006-2007 school year

- Human Rights (8 grade, MS);
- b) Civic Education (9 grade, HS);
- c) State and Law (10 grade, HS).

No final exam

- 1 hour per week



After 2006-2007 school year

- Me and My Surrounding (2-4 grades, PS);
- Armenian Studies (5 grade, MS);
- Basics of Social Studies (8 grade, MS);
- Human Rightst and Civic Education (9 grade, MS)
- Government, Ethics, Estetics, Psychology, Economics, Political Science (10-12 grades)

Also History, Geography and Armenian Church History (5-12 grades)

No final exam

The graduate of the middle school must:

- Emphasise the importance of active participation in the process of establishing and developing democracy and civil society within Armenia



Social Studies Standards



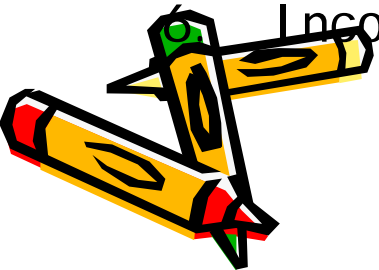
Individual and Society

1. Individual as a "perfect" member of a collectivist society and family
2. Citizen as a patriot and the patriotism
3. Owner of "higher level of thinking"
4. Education as a priority
5. Citizen's ability to organize themselves and their behavior in the society

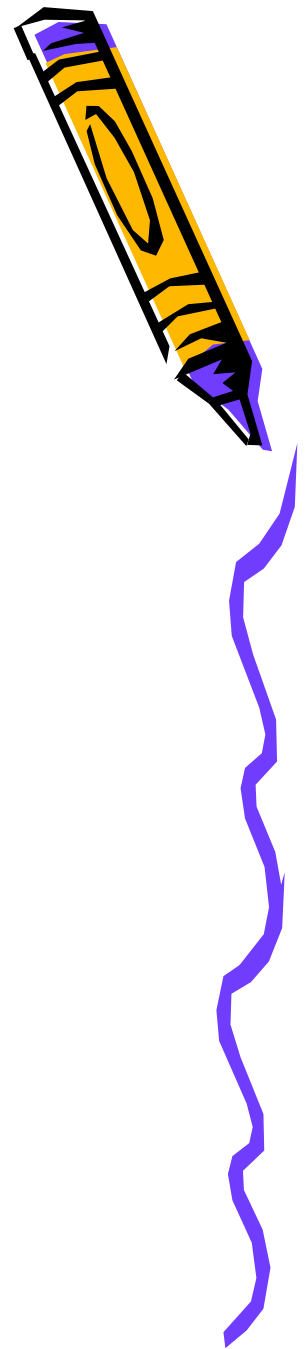
Incomplete democrat

Social Studies

1. Nature, human being, society -3 hours
2. Cognition and logics (thinking, concepts, judgment, conclusion, opinion, belief, fact, knowledge, high level thinking, comparison and contrast) -6 hours
3. Who am I? (Main characteristics of human being, body and spirit, health and care, man as an improving ego, beauty, gender, age, human being as a goal)-7 hours



Social Studies cont...



- **I live in a society** (what is society, individual-society relationships, communication, conflict management, small and big groups, identity) – 6 hours
- **Fundamental Principles of Democracy** (value system, democracy, democracy in Armenia, what is freedom, freedom and responsibility, taking responsibility: advantages and challenges, tolerance, justice) – 10 hours

Human Rights and Civic Education

- Human Rights Concept
- Basic Rights and Freedom of Citizens
- Human Rights of Special Groups
- Guarantees and Protection of Human Rights
- State Guarantees for protecting Human Rights



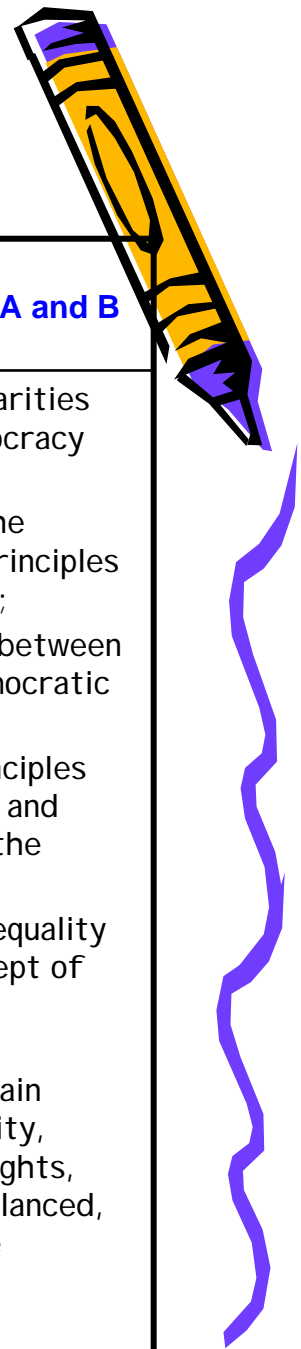
Civic Education



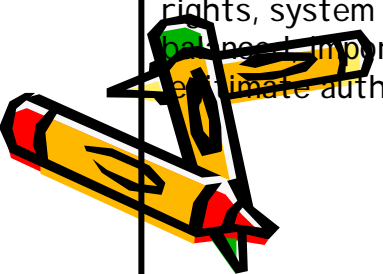
- **Democracy** (Concept of democracy: ideal and reality, constitutional democracy, direct and representative democracy, elections and campaigns)
- **Civic Society** (standing for own opinion, awareness as a precondition for participation, civil society and mass media, formation of public opinion, diversity, NGO, lobbying, corruption and its roots and forms)
- **Power and Authority** (why we should have authority; power separation: legislative, executive, and judicial; limited authority; checks and balances, regional administration and local self governance)
- **Community Problem Study** (community problem research and project implementation: identification of community problems, study of the selected problem, alternative solutions, reflection on the results)



**Requirements to Students:
Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**
As a result of learning Social Studies, the students shall:



Group A: minimum requirements	Group B: added to the requirements of Group A	Group C: added to the requirements of Group A and B
<p>Explain the concepts of democracy and freedom; Understand the importance of democracy and freedom for himself/herself and the society; Have knowledge about the principles and values of democracy, understand their need and perceive them as life style; List episodes of democracy recorded in the history of Armenia; Have knowledge about other governance systems (monarchy, oligarchy), have understanding about the concept of constitutionality (rule of majority, protection of minority rights, system of checks and balanced, importance of legitimate authorities)</p>	<p>Ability to distinguish between different categories of democratic society; Substantiate the importance of principles and values of democracy and their need him/her and the society; Ability to describe different governance systems specifying; Identify their similarities and differences (monarchy, oligarchy); Ability to comment on constitutional democracy describing its main principles (rule of majority, protection of minority rights, system of checks and balanced, importance of legitimate authorities); Understand and describe democratic elections as main institute for democratic representative government; Understand the difference between the different types of equality of rights - legal equality, equal opportunities, material</p>	<p>Ability to describe similarities and differences of democracy and freedom; Have knowledge about the historical roots of the principles and values of democracy; Ability to differentiate between operational types of democratic system; Explain the need of principles and values of democracy and their need him/her and the society; Understand the role of equality and link it with the concept of freedom; Interpret constitutional democracy underlining main principles (rule of majority, protection of minority rights, system of checks and balanced, importance of legitimate authorities)</p>



Textbooks

Before 2007-2008 year

- Human Rights, 8th grade, 2001
- Civic Education, 9th grade, 1999
- State and Law, 10th grade, 2001

Supplementary sources

- Civic Education, 7th grade, 2002
- Fundamental Principles of Democracy: Civic Education, 8(9)th grades, 2005

Since 2007

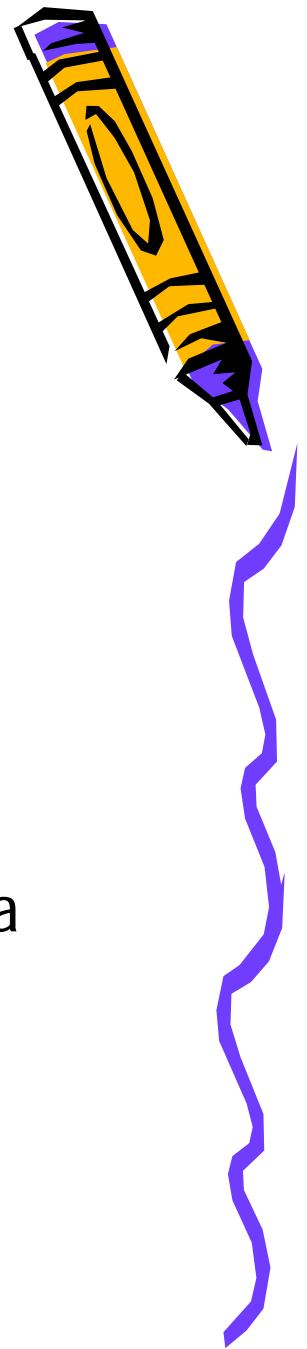
- Me and My Surrounding, 2nd grade, 2007
- Armenian Studies, 5th grade, 2007
- Basics of Social Studies, 8th grade, 2007

Forthcoming

- Me and My Surrounding, 3rd grade, 2008
- Me and My Surrounding, 4th grade, 2009
- **Human Rights and Civic Education, 9th grade, 2008**
- Government, 10th grade, 2009



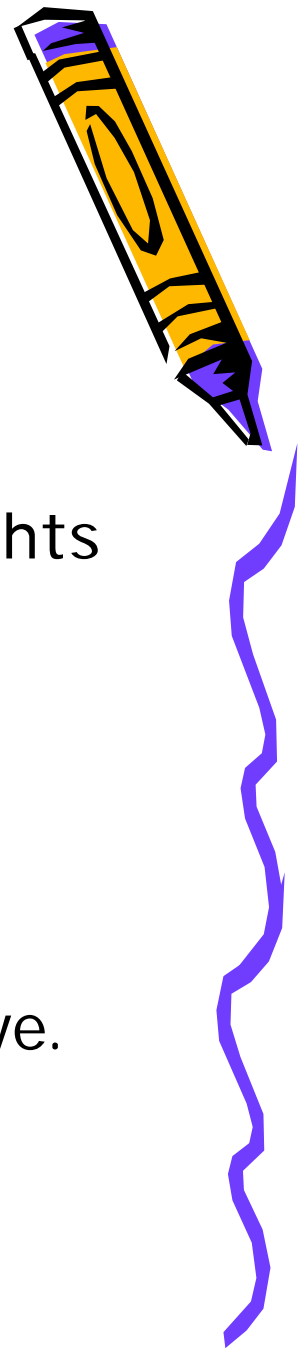
Teacher Trainings in Social Studies/Civics



- MoES implemented training seminars for all Armenian SS teachers to introduce the new curriculum, teaching methodologies, lesson planning and assessment
- Currently, a team of educators are preparing a training curriculum for SS/Civics teachers to introduce the new textbook and instructional materials



National Program and Standards for Social Studies - NP&SSS



- the democratic processes in the Republic of Armenia calls for developing such citizenship qualities as exploring and utilizing personal rights and responsibilities, positive participation and leadership, desire and willingness to seek out societal ideals
- Social studies instruction is meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging, and active.



Paidea



- A Social Studies classroom is seen as a mini-model for a democratic society, where the learners are independent, the teacher tries to utilize the strengths of every student for the sake of the whole.
- Students will internalize the culture of care and will not try to hide their personality behind a social group.
- Students will be able to understand the importance of their personality and will develop a high sense of responsibility



A citizen who understands the essential tenets of democracy is more likely to recognize that he has a shared interest, a collective interest that may or may not contradict or override his individual preferences (M. Branson).



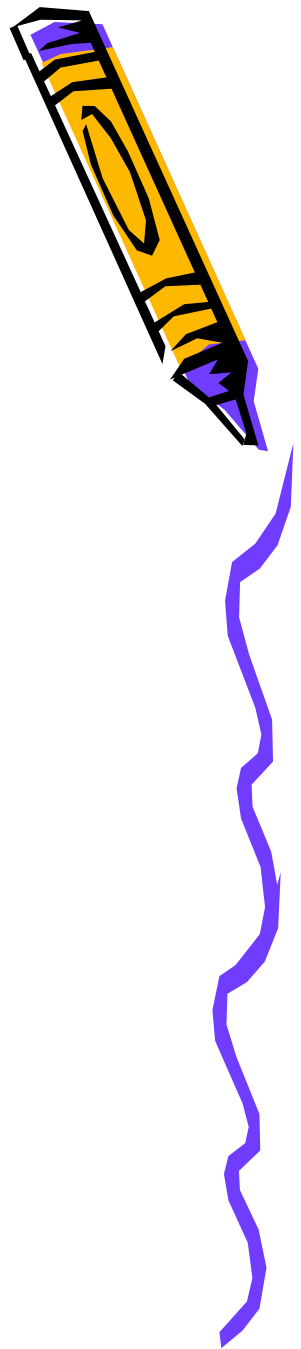
Practical Consequences

- The schools should enable their students to implement community learning projects, search and find community actual problems, propose sound solutions to those identified problems and follow them throughout their life.



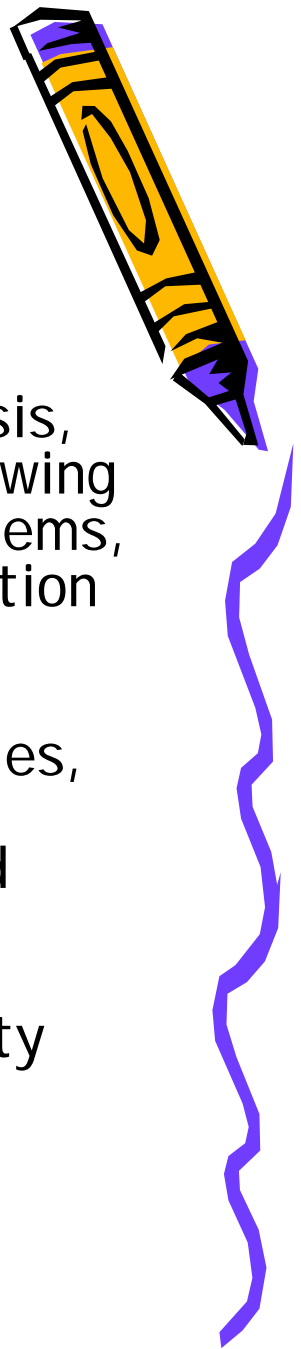
Some Premises

- development of patriotic and citizenship upbringing
- classroom practice should not be limited within the school walls
- school as a model of a democratic institution
- national values are protected

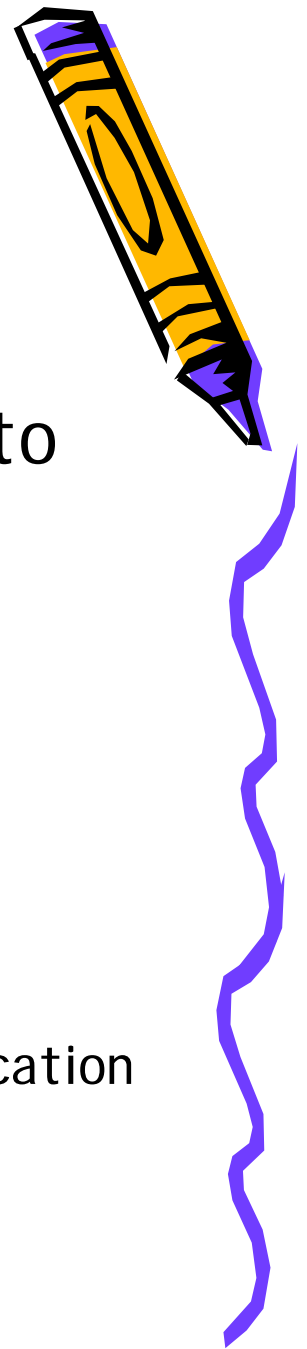


Classroom Environment

- brainstorming, exploring teaching materials, analysis, conversation, interview, mass media analysis, reviewing art works, discussing philosophical and moral problems, researching a problem, role plays, peer communication using Internet, meeting with university faculty members and professionals, games, performances, competitions, report preparation and writing, debates, tests, utilizing information and communication technologies, developing and assessing student and teacher portfolios, openly discussing conflicting issues, independent and group work, implementing projects, community service learning and community problem study



An International Context



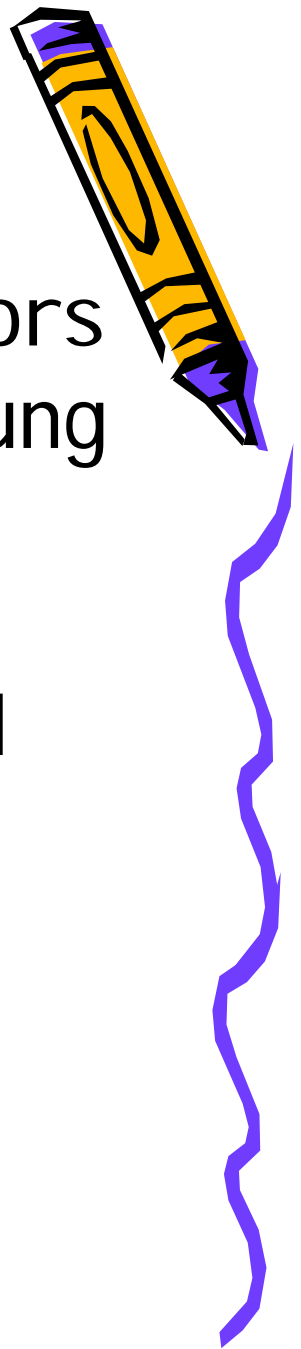
- The ultimate goal of Civic Education is to prepare generations for the essential principles and values of democracy embodied with a high sense of responsibility and active engagement in issues the society, community, or state face in their everyday life

Center for Civic Education



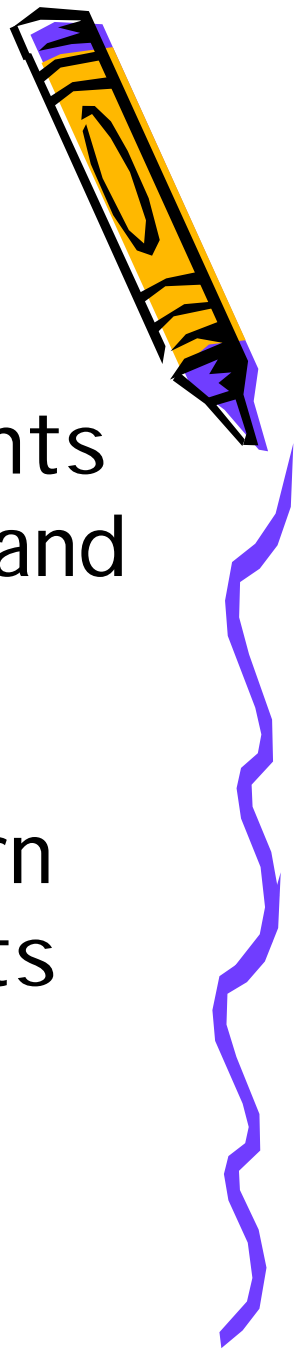
What Is Civic Education?

- One of the challenges civic educators face is how to help not only the young but adult citizens as well develop a more realistic understanding of today's world in which they live and why the manner in which complex global problems are addressed affects them.



What Is Civic Education?

- schools should “deal with all students in such a way as to motivate them and enable them to play their parts as informed, responsible, committed, and effective members of a modern democratic political system” - Butts



The Civic Mission of Schools



- *Schools should provide sound formal instruction in government, history, law, and democracy.*
- *Schools should include discussion of current events at local, national, and international levels and particularly those events that students see as important to their lives.*
- *Schools should provide students with opportunities to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction.*



The Civic Mission of Schools – cont.



- *Schools should provide students opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities focused on civic life.*
- *Schools should provide students opportunities to participate in student government that gives them a meaningful voice in the management of their own classrooms and schools.*
- *Schools should provide students opportunities to take part in simulations of democratic processes and procedures such as simulations of legislative, administrative, and judicial hearings; lobbying; coalition building; negotiation; and seeking consensus or compromise.*



Education for Democratic Citizenship



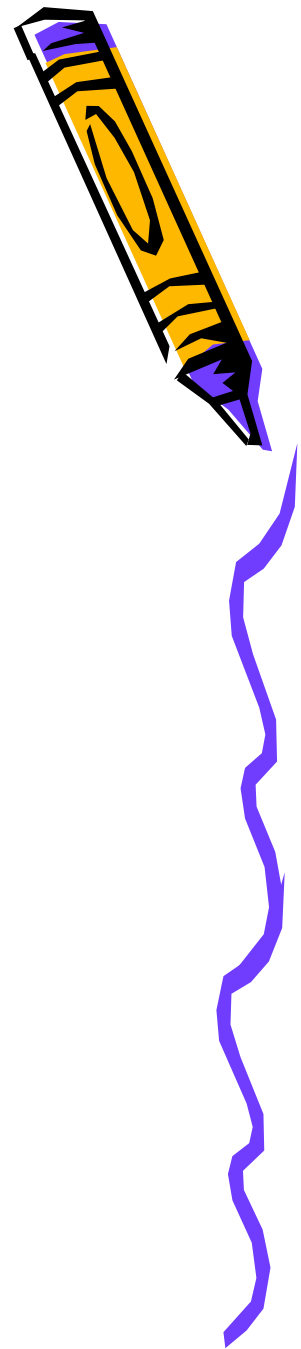
- *The political and legal dimension that covers citizens rights, respect to each other, the political systems, and the law,*
- *The social dimension that refers to individuals' behaviour towards each other within the society by using the established social institutions,*
- *The economic dimension that deals with economic relations and organization, production and distribution of goods, services and information,*
- *The cultural dimension that connects the shared values, traditions and customs of nations, peoples and groups*





- The Latvian policy makers believe that besides contributing to economic development, the education reforms should promote “genuine democracy”, transparent society, and citizens’ active participation (Latvia MoES, 2004, p. 18).



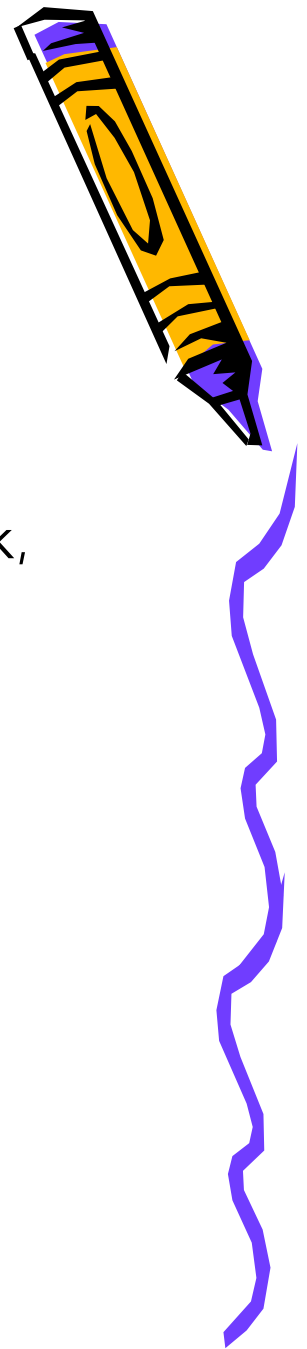


Their Serbian colleagues see Civic Education in the secondary schools as a vehicle for enabling school students to acquire awareness, develop abilities and skills and embrace values and dispositions that will shape competent individuals committed to building “involved and responsible life in civil society with respect for human rights and freedom, peace, tolerance and gender equity, understanding and friendship among peoples. Ethnic, national and religious groups” (Smith, Fountain & McLean , 2002, p. 40).

In England, the aim of Citizenship Education is to promote and shape citizens with social and moral responsibilities, enhance community involvement and political literacy (Kerr, 1999).



Research Methodology



- Participants
 - 75 middle and high school students from Shirak, Syunik, Lori Marzes and Yerevan city
 - 9 teachers
 - Education policy members and other educators

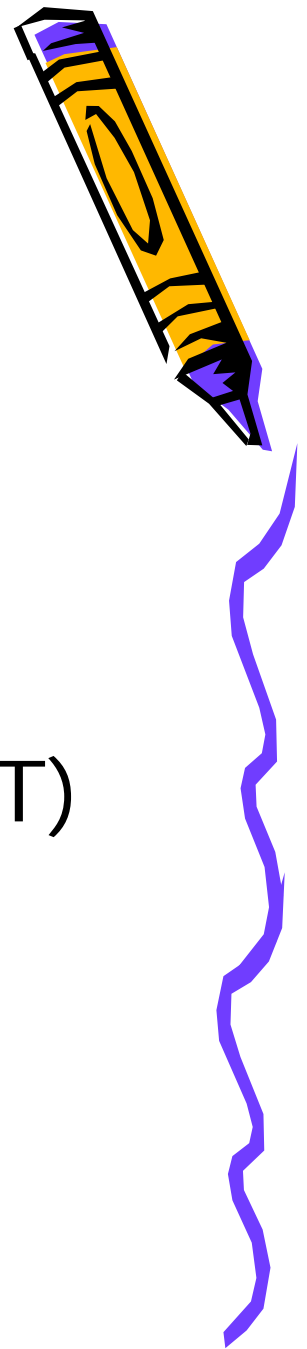




Region	Male	Female	9 th graders	10 th graders	total	%
	8	24	3	29	32	42.67%
	7	14	1	20	21	28.00%
Vanadzor	2	9	1	10	11	14.67%
Gyumri	2	9	2	9	11	14.67%
Goris						
Total	19	56	7	68	75	100.00%
%	25.33%	74.67%	9.33%	90.67%	100.00%	



Instruments:



- Document review
- The structured questionnaire for students
- The structured questionnaire (SQT) for teachers
- Dialogic interviews
- The classroom observation box



Classroom Observation Box

What percent of students are actively engaged in classroom activities? _____

Are there any marginal students?

Check all types of activities observed

___ lecture

___ group activity/discussion

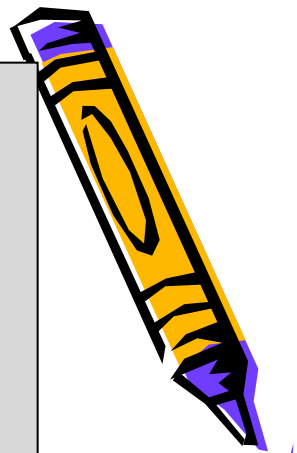
___ seat work

___ computer work

___ role play, simulation, game

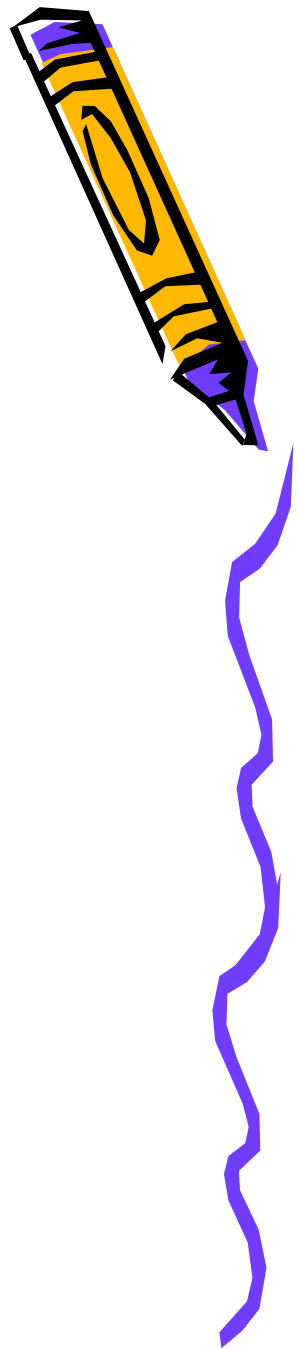
___ other interactive activity

- What kind of materials is the teacher using in the classroom? Specify _____
- Is the teacher giving proper feedback? _____
- Is the lesson participatory? _____
- Are the students cooperating? ___ Is the decision making process transparent? ___
- Are the students freely expressing their ideas? _____
- Is there any guest speaker- professional or community leader in the classroom? ___
- Is the teacher using the teaching time effectively? _____
- Is the teacher utilizing appropriate teaching methods? _____



Design

- The primary method of gathering data was planned to be a multi-method and multi-source approach descriptive study.



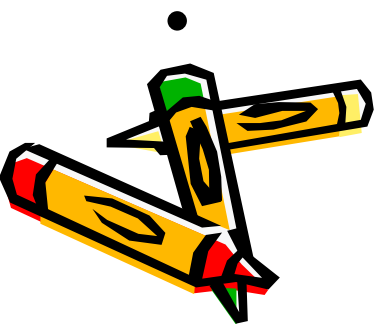
Procedures

- **Document review:** curriculum, civics standards, civics projects initiated by different organizations, the paper-based and electronic materials , textbooks, and other related documents and instructional materials, international documents and books
- **observations, teacher and students structured questionnaires, teachers, students, and parent interviews**
- in 9 randomly selected schools



Procedures cont.

- School selection from four regions by random stratified sampling
- *Classroom and teacher selection* by simple random sampling
- *Students selection* from 10th and 11th grades by systematic sampling



Results - Observation

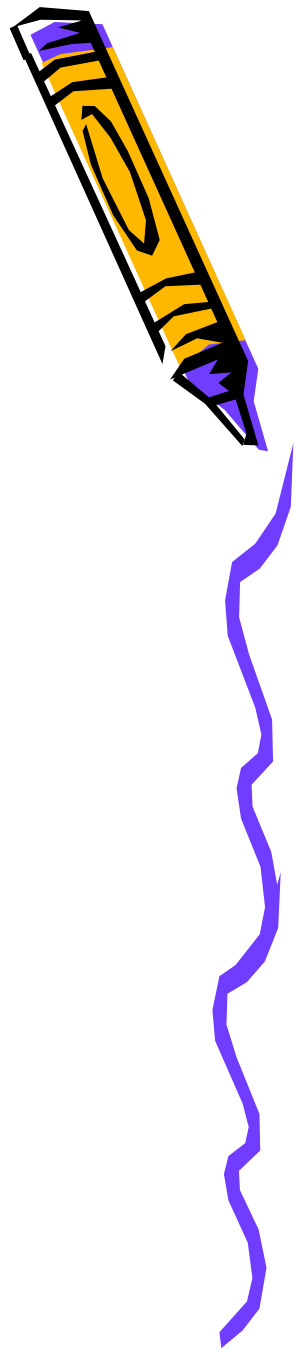


- teacher training – 4.4 times during the last 8 years
- civics textbook as the most important teaching resource
- utilizing the traditional teaching method by introducing only some elements of active teaching.
- Classroom discussion and questioning
- One case related to studying minorities

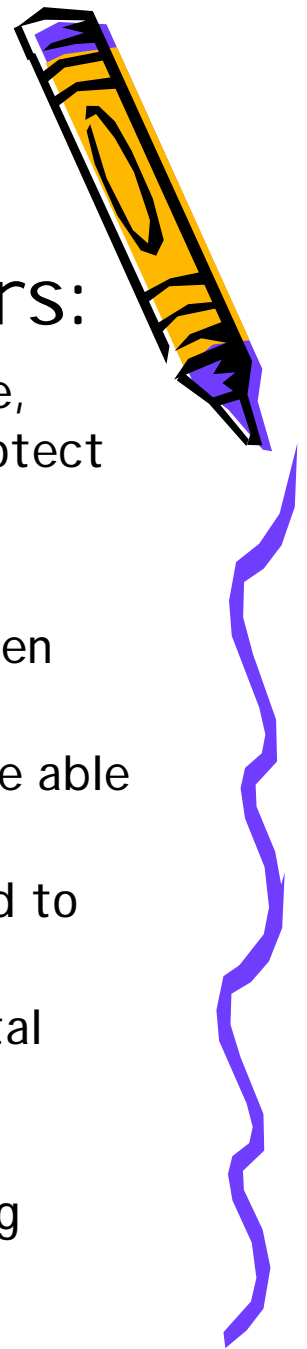


Results – observation cont...

- Huge representation of marginal students and the problem of “high performing” students (dominant effect)
- Reading, participation and learning motivation



Results - Teacher Interview



- The aim of teaching civics by teachers:
- The members of civil society should learn about the state, government system, and their individual rights in order to protect them.
- To learn about civil rights, citizen and alien rights.
- To obtain knowledge about the society and authorities and then apply that knowledge in real situations.
- To educate a politically rich generation, members of which are able to protect their rights and to form a healthy society.
- To inform students about their rights and responsibilities and to prepare knowledgeable and ready citizens.
- To prepare active and knowledgeable citizens with fundamental values of democracy.
- To form a Citizen for the 21th century: self-confident, self-organized, being able to orientate in various situations, valuing rights and responsibilities, effective citizen, democrat.

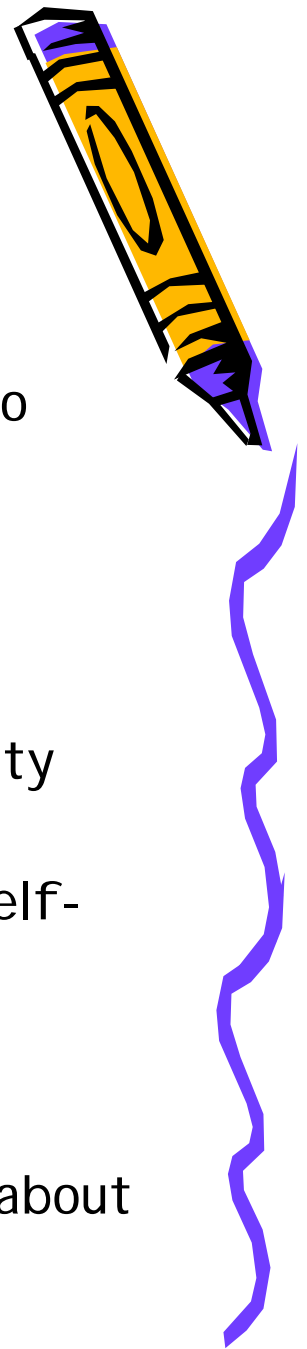


Results - Teacher Interview cont.

- Teacher preparation
- Strengths and weaknesses of training



Results - Teacher Interview cont.



- low student learning motivation,
- inadequate experience of using interactive methods,
- the overloaded textbook is difficult for the students to understand,
- the discreteness of the Social Studies in the National Curriculum,
- the teaching time. We need extra time for excursions,
- ICT usage in the schooling process and lack of familiarity with new technologies
- Lack of materials and supplies, cooperation with local self-administrative bodies,
- difficulty of implementation of practical lessons,
- communities are not supportive,
- the school principal and other administrators complain about the noise when we use interactive methods.



Results - Teacher Interview cont.

- Civics Curriculum and themes
- Extracurricular activities and supporting student civic learning out of the classroom (student council, meeting with specialists, extra classes)
- Active participation by teacher

Parent involvement



Results - Teacher Interview cont.

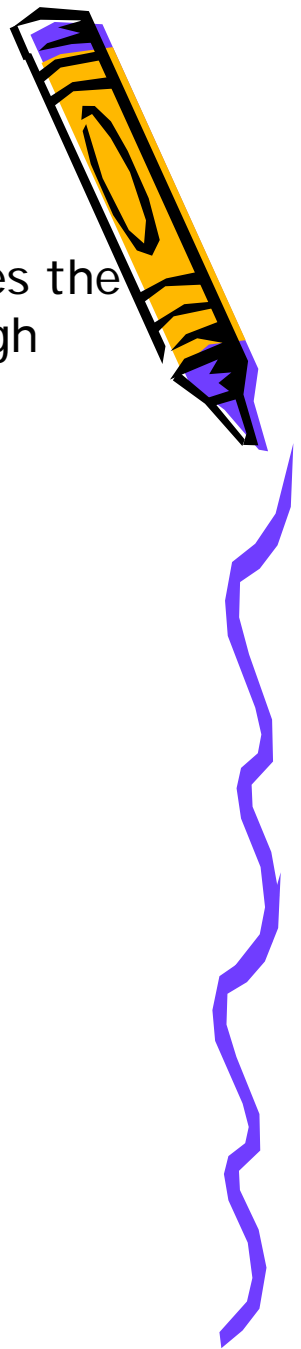


- Over 75% of teachers stated that they answer all the questions raised by their students
- All the teachers (100%) responded that their students have a chance to express their opinions often.
- Newspapers are leading among the materials used by teachers in Armenian civics classrooms and the frequency of newspaper usage is the highest as reported by the interviewed teachers.

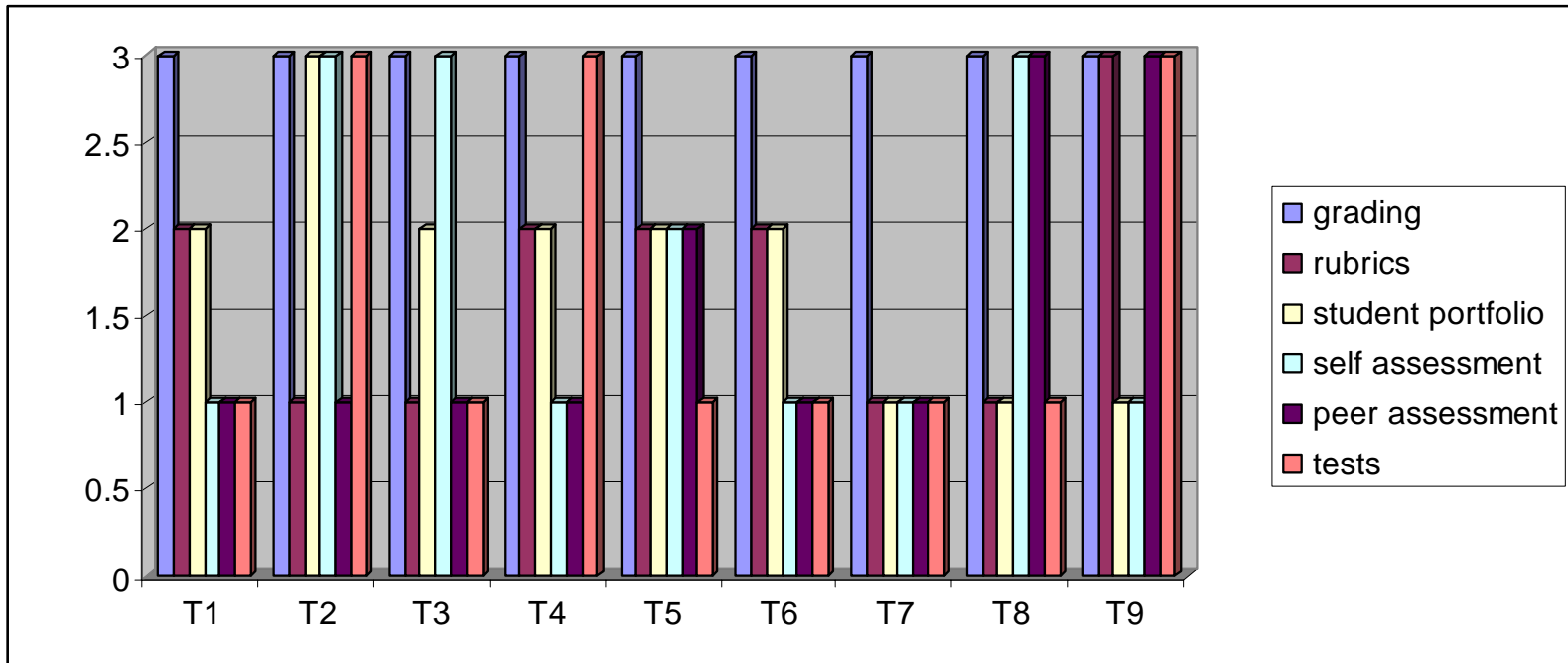


Results - Teacher Interview cont.

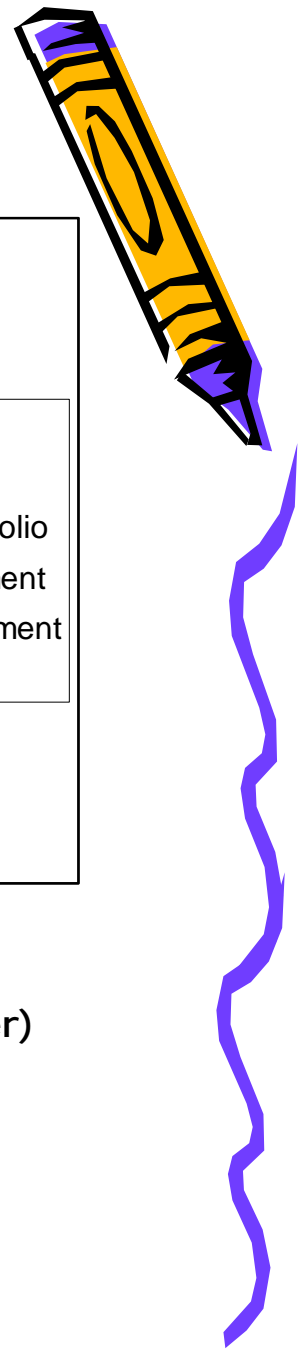
- Over 65 % of the teachers believe that the course encourages the students to get involved in solving community problems through active exercises.
- Course Effectiveness by teachers
- Improving teacher learning



Assessment



Assessment tools teachers utilizing in classrooms (3=often, 2=sometimes, 1=never)



Student Interviews:



- The aim of Civic Education:
 - “to learn the Armenian *laws, rights, and responsibilities*”.
 - me to protect my rights
 - to learn “all rights and responsibilities of a citizen
 - to learn about *human rights and liberties*
- Learning for the future*



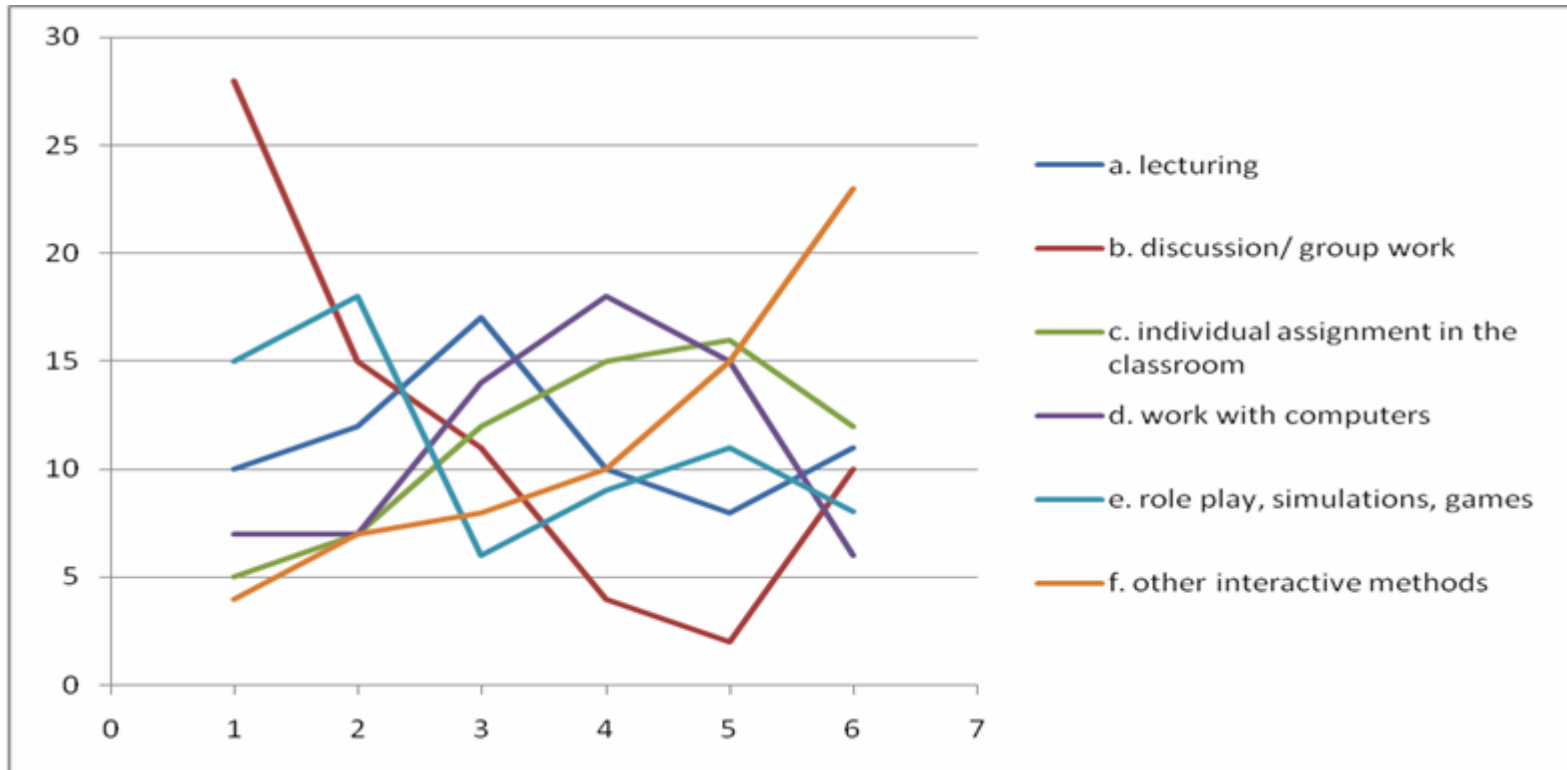
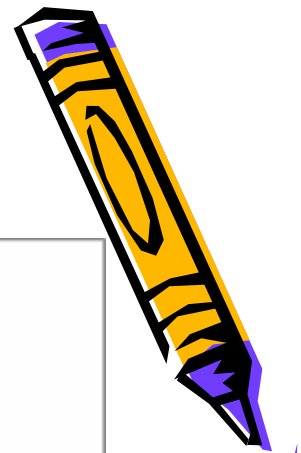
Student Interviews: cont.



- the great majority (81%) of the students agree or strongly agree that their civic classrooms promote active citizenship
- 80% of the students believe that their teachers respond to all the questions during the classroom instruction and 60% of the questions after lessons.
- only 55 % of students or 41 respondents think that they were able to freely express their opinions and ideas during the lessons



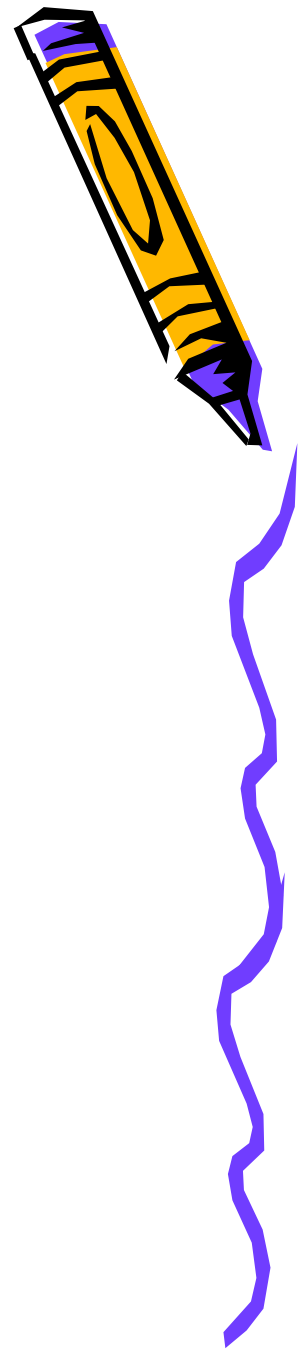
Student Interviews: cont.



Preferred learning styles by students



Student Interviews: cont.

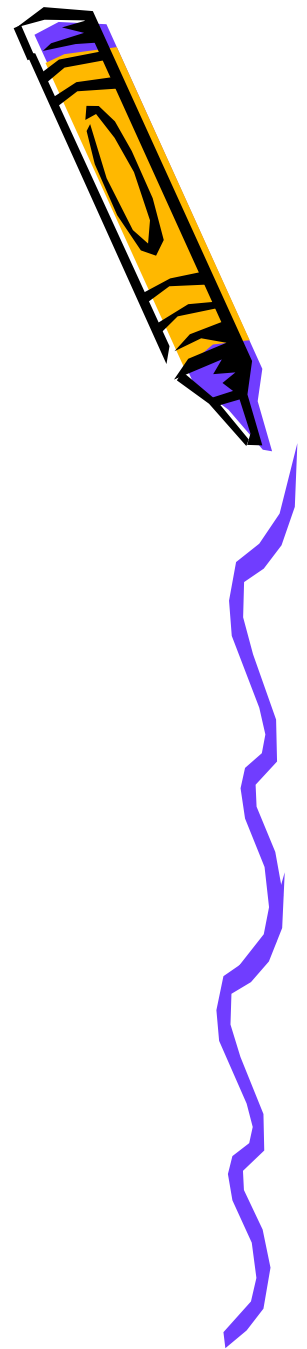


Topics of Civic	a. the topic is very important	b. the topic is desirable to learn	c. the topic is boring	Would you like to extend your knowledge about the topic?
Education				
Power and Authority	54%	42%	4%	54.8%
Democracy	61%	36%	3%	72.2%
Civil Society	58%	37%	5%	70.8%
Non-governmental Organizations	27%	56%	16%	52.8%
Economic Base of Civil Society	37%	44%	20%	50.7%
Legal Status of a Citizen in	83%	14%	3%	91.8%
RA President	62%	31%	7%	65.2%
Legislative branch of Power: National Assembly	49%	41%	10%	62.3%
Executive Branch of Power	38%	47%	15%	49.3%
Judicial Branch of Power	68%	25%	7%	69.1%
Regional Government and Local Self Administration	41%	41%	18%	46.4%
Foreign Policy and Diplomacy	59%	32%	9%	65.2%



The importance of Civic Education topics to the students

Student Interviews: cont.



- 56 students reported that they participated in activities such as clean ups, tree planting, visiting orphanages and elderly houses and helping people living in there, Olympiads, fundraising, HIV campaign, charities.



Student Interviews: cont.

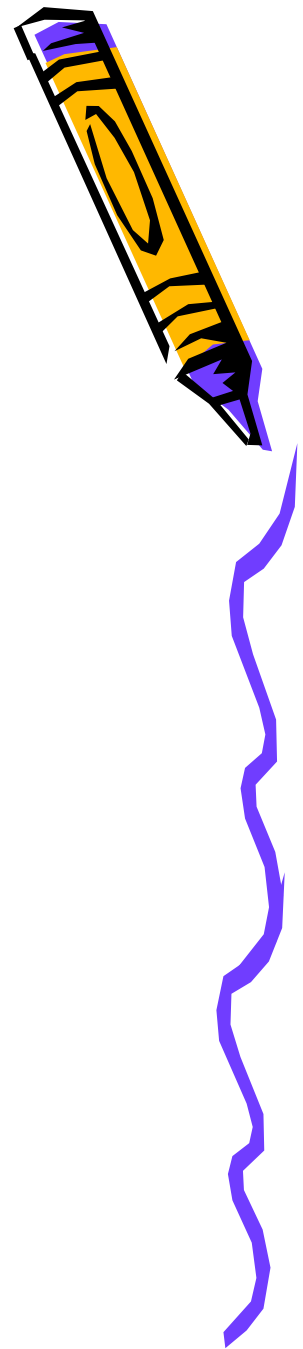


- 81.3% of the students rated very high (6.5 out of 8) the family effectiveness for promoting civics.
- Over 80% of the students believe in the fact that the course contributes linking the students and their communities
- 53 percent of the students claimed that the civics course was the most active/interactive among the others

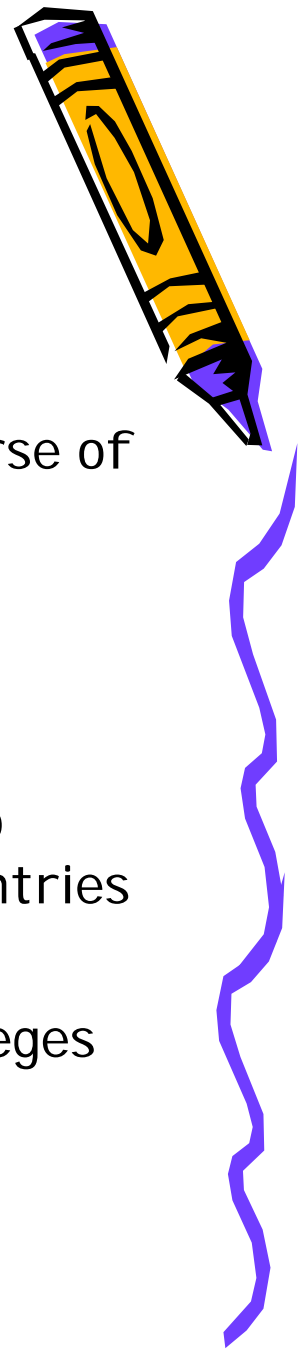


Student suggested civic topics to be included in the civics curriculum.

- youth issues, laws and rules related to students,
- children's rights, student and teacher rights, parent-children relationship, family violations,
- economy, hygiene, ecology, nature protection, pollution, environmental issues,
- patriotism, self-defense,
- new constitution, criminal law, politics, diplomacy, earth, world change,
- unwritten rules, the law creation mechanisms, marriage,
- freedom, responsibilities,
- alcoholism, anti-smoking, HIV/AIDS, drugs, and other modern hot topics

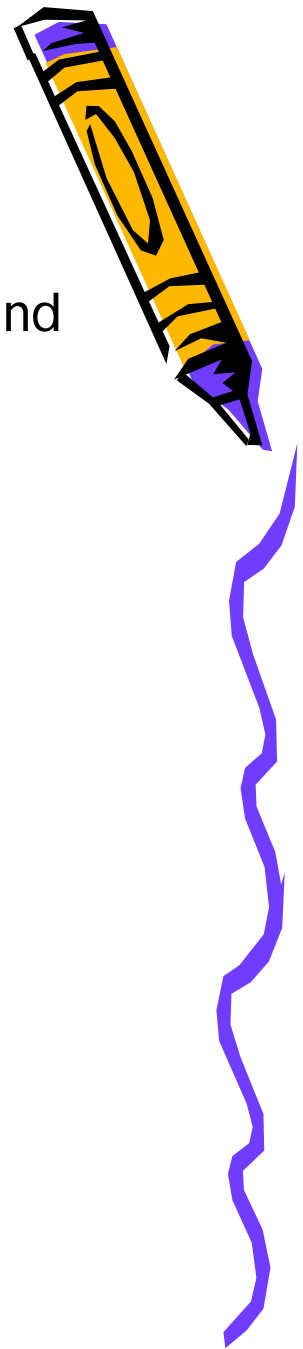


Policy Recommendations



- public education is distinguished as *education for democratic citizenship*
- The materials give substance and durability to the course of civic education.
- Armenia needs civic-minded people
- Social Studies program and standards are congruent to effective civic education curricula utilized in many countries
- Work closely with the pedagogical universities and colleges in developing and implementing sound civics programs





- Mandatory textbooks limit possibilities for creativity and critical thinking.
- utilizing interactive methods in the classroom
- team activities, cooperative learning and reflection
- Civic Education is responsible for shaping citizens
- Crucial role of student councils
- Teacher preparation and motivation
- Student motivation
- Formal and non formal learning



Civic Education consolidates knowledge with civic skills and dispositions and the students need to learn not only the branches of power and their functions, but also should learn how to participate actively, communicate effectively, improve leadership skills, respect others and their opinions, promote participatory decision-making process, follow the principles of tolerance, be responsible for personal learning and actions, be committed to contributing the society's common good and other skills and values necessary for being an effective citizen in a democratic society.



The Last Sentence...

- there is a fertile ground for the Armenian teachers to work with the students in classrooms and out of school settings to prepare better democratic citizens. The Constitution is the main document that dictates to the educators the legality to ensure democratic context and content. The recent National Curriculum for General Education also promotes active learning, utilization of contemporary pedagogical approaches and creation of learners with creative, effective leadership, and communication skills. Besides those documents, there are some policy level legislative, normative documents that undermine the preparation of a citizen committed to the fundamental principles, skills, and values of a democracy.





Special Thanks to:

Caucasus Research Resource Centers

www.crrc.am/index.php/en/17/73/

All participated teacher, students, schools
administrators, policy makers, my international
colleagues

Marcie Taylor Thoma from Maryland State
Department of Education and
the Center for Civic Education

