

NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Serve. Learn. Change the world.®

NEW FOR 2026–2027

Introducing the Service-Learning Civic Seal Community of Practice

An 8-month community of practice for educators and leaders using service-learning to build civic engagement programs that last.

October 2026 – May 2027

We hear this a lot from districts working on civic seal implementation: the first year goes fine, but by year two, momentum stalls. Staff turn over. Teachers aren't sure what the seal asks of them. And the students who were supposed to benefit most still feel like bystanders.

The nylc Service-Learning Civic Seal Community of Practice was designed for exactly that moment.

Starting this September, nylc is offering an 8-month, virtual community of practice for district leaders, curriculum coordinators, and educators navigating civic seal work. Six sessions from September 2026 through May 2027, with a consistent group of peers from districts across the country and a natural break built in over December. Practical, focused, and built around what your team is actually working on.

The 2026–2027 Session Schedule

October 21, 2026; 6-7pm Central - Session 1

Setting the Foundation

Establish shared language, take an honest look at where each district stands with civic seal implementation, and set goals your cohort will work toward together across the year.

November 18, 2026; 6-7pm Central - Session 2

Connecting Service-Learning to Civic Seal Criteria

Walk through the key civic seal criteria for your state and identify exactly where high-quality service-learning addresses them. Participants leave with a practical mapping tool and concrete examples to bring back to their schools.

January 20, 2027; 6-7pm Central Session 3

Youth Voice in Implementation

Students should help shape civic seal programs, not just receive them. This session draws on NYLC's youth-adult partnership frameworks to give participants practical strategies for involving young people in design, reflection, and advocacy.

February 17, 2027; 6-7pm Central - Session 4

Engaging Teachers Across Content Areas

Civic engagement shouldn't live in the social studies' classroom. This session gives instructional leaders strategies for bringing math, science, ELA, and other content-area teachers into the work, including how to address common hesitations and connect to what every teacher already cares about.

March 17, 2027; 6-7pm Central - Session 5

Making It Meaningful, Not Just a Checkbox

When the focus stays on documentation and compliance, students miss the deeper value of civic engagement. This session helps leaders shift from a paperwork mindset to a purpose-driven one, building student and staff investment in what the seal actually represents.

May 19, 2027; 6-7pm Central - Session 6

Sustaining and Scaling

Reflect on the year, share what's working, and build a concrete plan for carrying the work forward. We'll focus on structures that survive staff turnover, budget shifts, and changing priorities, so that civic engagement becomes a durable part of your school culture.

Why nylc?

- 40+ years working with schools and districts on service-learning and civic engagement.
- Experience working with school districts and county offices of education
- Facilitation that centers youth voice and practical application, not just frameworks.
- A network of educators doing this work across the country, in school, afterschool, and community contexts.
- Documented PD hours and a certificate of completion for every participant.

Space in each cohort is limited to keep the experience personal and the conversations honest.