



### Citizenship - Civic Minded Engagement

#### School Board Outreach

Please read this report about Civic Minded Engagement amongst Australian youth -

[https://www.aph.gov.au/~media/wopapub/house/committee/em/education/report/Chapter2\\_pdf.ashx](https://www.aph.gov.au/~media/wopapub/house/committee/em/education/report/Chapter2_pdf.ashx)

Write and garner support for a letter to a local school board, asking them to champion civic minded engagement within their school's curriculum. Support can come from fellow students, educators, parents, administrators and/or community members. The more support you gain, the louder your voice. Ask these supporters to sign onto the letter!

Below is a guide and letter template for writing to your school board. This is a starting point — the rest is up to you!

#### It's similar to writing to your leaders!

- **Who are you and what is the issue that you are addressing?** Introduce yourself and indicate that you are a volunteer for The Borgen Project. Introduce the importance of civic-minded engagement in your education.
- **What are your points of concern?** Use a “hook” and explain the “problem”. The hook should be a short statement that engages the reader, usually featuring an interesting fact. Make this orientated to the school, your community and your experiences.
- **Why does this matter to you and your community?** Give the school board reasons to support you and your ask. Explain the importance of citizenship / civic-minded engagement for youth and your community.
- **What are your recommendations for action?** This is your ask! Ask for a letter in response to you with the school board's public commitment to bolstering or supporting said programs. Another option is to ask them to introduce programs like these to the curriculum, or to strengthen them if they already exist.

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### *Template*

**Note: Be sure to customize your letter appropriately — make it personal!**

[Your Name]  
[Your Address]  
[Date]

[School District and Board]  
[Address]

Dear [Name of District] School Board Members:

My name is [XXXX] and I am a student at [XXXX], and an advocate with The Borgen Project (<https://borgenproject.org/>). With the support of my peers, I am writing to the [school district name] School Board to express the importance of youth-orientated civically-minded engagement and its inclusion in the [school's name] curriculum.

It is in my experience at [school name] that students are not broadly educated on the importance of partaking in community engagement, advocacy, or the civic life of our community. This truly is an unfortunate disservice that needs to be remedied, and your commitment to supporting such opportunities will allow students to learn what it takes to be productive citizens and civically engaged members of society.

Youth civic engagement is important for many reasons. It can embolden cohesion in our community, and reduce prevalent and pervasive inequities. It can build community among student-life, drive teamwork skills, and help ignite a sense of dedication and hardwork. Youth civic engagement also drives test scores higher and socially benefits the community.

With my peers, I ask that the [school district name] School Board supports and bolsters youth-orientated civically-minded engagement programs in the curriculum today, for not only will it benefit the students, but it will also benefit our community long into the future.

I would love the opportunity to speak with the School Board more on this subject and work with you to ensure that a robust discussion about youth-civic engagement takes place. Thank you for your time and dedication to the students and faculty of [XXXX] School District.

Sincerely,

Signature  
[Your name]  
[The signatures, names, and titles of your supporting peers et al.]

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### How to send your letter

1. Locate the address of the school board. This can be found with a quick Google search.
2. Address your envelope to the [District Name] School Board.
3. Provide a return address on the envelope and ensure that proper postage is included.

### How to present your letter

As mentioned, it may be a good idea to present to the school board as well. This gives a personal touch to your letter. When you present, consider bringing some of your letter co-signers with you as well!

- Locate on the school board's website their calendar or meeting schedule.
- Pick a few dates and begin preparing your presentation. You may need to attend a few meetings before you are able to present. Be sure to research protocols that the school board might have in place for presentations. Can technology be used? Etc.
- Be sure to reference your letter, and bring copies to be distributed to the board members if possible. This is your time to elaborate on your letter. Discuss in-depth your 'ask' and why it is important to you, your peers, and your community.
- Dress professionally and be prepared for questions.
- Presenting to school boards is similar to city councils: [City Council Presentations](#).