

Every day, in every community, every child in America
benefits from a quality public education.

National Civic Index (NCI) for Quality Public Education:
*The “Doppler” for Measuring a Community’s Civic
Involvement in Support of Public Schools*

*National School Boards Association/Council of Urban Boards of
Education*
April 5, 2009



Public involvement. Public education. Public benefit.

***A Project of Public Education Network
And GiveKidsGoodSchools.com***



To build public demand and mobilize resources for quality public education
for all children through a national constituency of local education funds and individuals.

Civic Index for Quality Public Education

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Sign-up for the PEN NewsBlast:
www.PublicEducation.org

Public Education Network

Public Education Network (PEN) is a national organization of 82 local education funds (LEFs) and individuals working to improve public schools and **build citizen support for quality public education in low-income communities across the nation.**

Our mission: To build public demand and community responsibility for quality public education for all children through a national constituency of local education funds and individuals.

Summary of the Network

- **82 Local Education Funds in 31 states, DC, Puerto Rico, and 5 foreign countries**
- **Created in 1983, non-profit, independent of the school district**
- **Promote public engagement in public education**
- **Raise roughly \$200 million annually to improve public schools and increase student achievement**
- **Raised nearly \$4 billion to date for quality public education**
- **Invested over \$1.5 billion in teacher quality**
- **Made measureable gains in teaching quality, life skills, high school reform, school governance, school finance, and schools and communities**

National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education

What is a National Civic Index?

- It is a tool....
- to help communities gain a better understanding of the role civic action plays in the quality of public education....
- that will lead to strategies which can increase civic capacity through public engagement, and.....
- provide a civic vocabulary to talk about the needs and importance of community participation leading to increased.....
- Help the community talk about itself and promote
- community awareness about what civic behaviors critical for quality public schools.

National Civic Index on a Quality Public Education

Web-based Tool Kit

- How to raise your civic score
- How to administer the NCI
- Strategies for coalition building, policy influence, public engagement, and media
- Developing a report and making recommendations

NATIONAL CIVIC INDEX FOR QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION

HELPING COMMUNITIES MEASURE THEIR CIVIC INVOLVEMENT, AND DEVISE STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Welcome to Public Education Network's Interactive National Civic Index

The active role of citizens is critical and fundamental toward creating a vibrant and strong public education system. A community without the participation of its citizens is incomplete, and without the participation of citizens, it will be difficult for our public schools to meet the national goals of placing a qualified teacher in every classroom, and providing a quality educational opportunity for every student.

The role for today's and tomorrow's citizens mean individuals must be willing to take responsibility for demanding quality public education by stepping forward to share the burden of difficult decision-making and challenging problem-solving to reform our schools. Therefore, the Public Education Network proposes a test and a national launch of its National Civic Index for Quality Public Education to help communities measure their civic involvement, and devise strategies for increasing civic engagement.

WHAT IS THE CIVIC INDEX
HOW TO USE THE WEBSITE
CIVIC INDEX WITH INDICATORS
INDIVIDUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT
HOW TO CONDUCT A NATIONAL CIVIC INDEX PROJECT IN YOUR COMMUNITY
HOW TO INTERPRET AND ANALYZE THE NATIONAL CIVIC INDEX RESULTS IN MY COMMUNITY
COMPARING MY COMMUNITY RESULTS: NATIONALLY AND OTHER COMMUNITIES
HOW TO IMPROVE MY CIVIC INDEX SCORE
TAKING ADVANTAGE OF MEDIA STRATEGIES

NATIONAL CIVIC INDEX FOR QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION INTERACTIVE ONLINE TOOLKIT

- EDUCATION LEADERSHIP OF LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS
- COMMITMENT TO THE VALUES OF TOLERANCE AND INCLUSIVENESS
- ACTIVE PARENTS
- STRONG CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS (PARENT, PHILANTHROPIC, CIVIC/RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS)
- UTILIZATION OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE DATA TO IMPROVE SCHOOL QUALITY
- YOUTH INVOLVEMENT
- KNOWLEDGE OF AND VOTING FOR SCHOOL BOARD
- PARTNERSHIPS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION
- ACTIVE BUSINESS COMMUNITY
- MEDIA COVERAGE

PUBLIC EDUCATION NETWORK
MetLife Foundation

National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education

Why a National Civic Index?

- Little attention has been paid to the role of the community in assuring quality public education for every child
- Relationship between the components of education reform and the role of civic behavior
- To help a community measure--to take its temperature—about its civic involvement, and take steps to improve

How Can the *Civic Index* Help Your Community?

The Index:

- **Is a start of a journey and not the end**
- **Helps communities define and measure their support of their public schools**
- **Helps communities identify what they are doing right and what they can do to improve their support for their public schools**
- **Offers strategies and other resources for communities to increase their support for their schools**

Who Can Use the National Civic Index?

- **Local education funds**
- **Other community-based organizations such as the United Way, community foundations, community organizers**
- **Elected officials such as school boards**
- **Superintendents and other educators**
- **Media**
- **IDEALLY—all of the above or a community partnership**

National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education

What the Civic Index is NOT

- An end, but a means to an end
- Surgical instrument, but designed to determine trends
- Information about facts, but about community opinions and perceptions
- A one shot gimmick: but rather designed for follow-up and action
- Designed to blame the community, place blame, but an assessment of opinion
- There are no right or wrong answers

Index Derived from PEN's national polling..

PEN's national polling.....



In partnership with *Education Week*, PEN conducted five national polls between 2001 and 2008 to define American attitudes toward public responsibility for public education. The public ask: **What are the most important civic and community attributes for a quality public education.”**

Took Lead from Existing Index Models

- **Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey**
(Saguaro Seminar, 2001)
- **The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE), 2004, Youth Involvement**
- **Voter Involvement Index**
(Shorenstein Center, 2000)
- **Index of National Civic Health**
(National Commission on Civic Renewal, 2004)
- **National Civic Index**
(National Civic League, revised 2003)
- **North Carolina Civic Education Consortium**
(State-wide Project with UNC, Chapel Hill)

Consulted With Experts

30 national experts from universities and national organizations, representing all 10 index categories, worked with PEN to:

- **Clarify the 10 index categories**
- **Develop indicators for each category**
- **Develop poll to track indicators and identify indicators that need additional research**
- **Literature review of issues, tools, and best practices for on-line toolkit**

National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education

Components of the National Civic Index

- **10 Index Categories**
- **42 Indicators, approximately 3-4 per Index Category**
- **Pre-developed poll that measure 32 of the indicators**
- **Additional research**
- **NCI tool-kit**

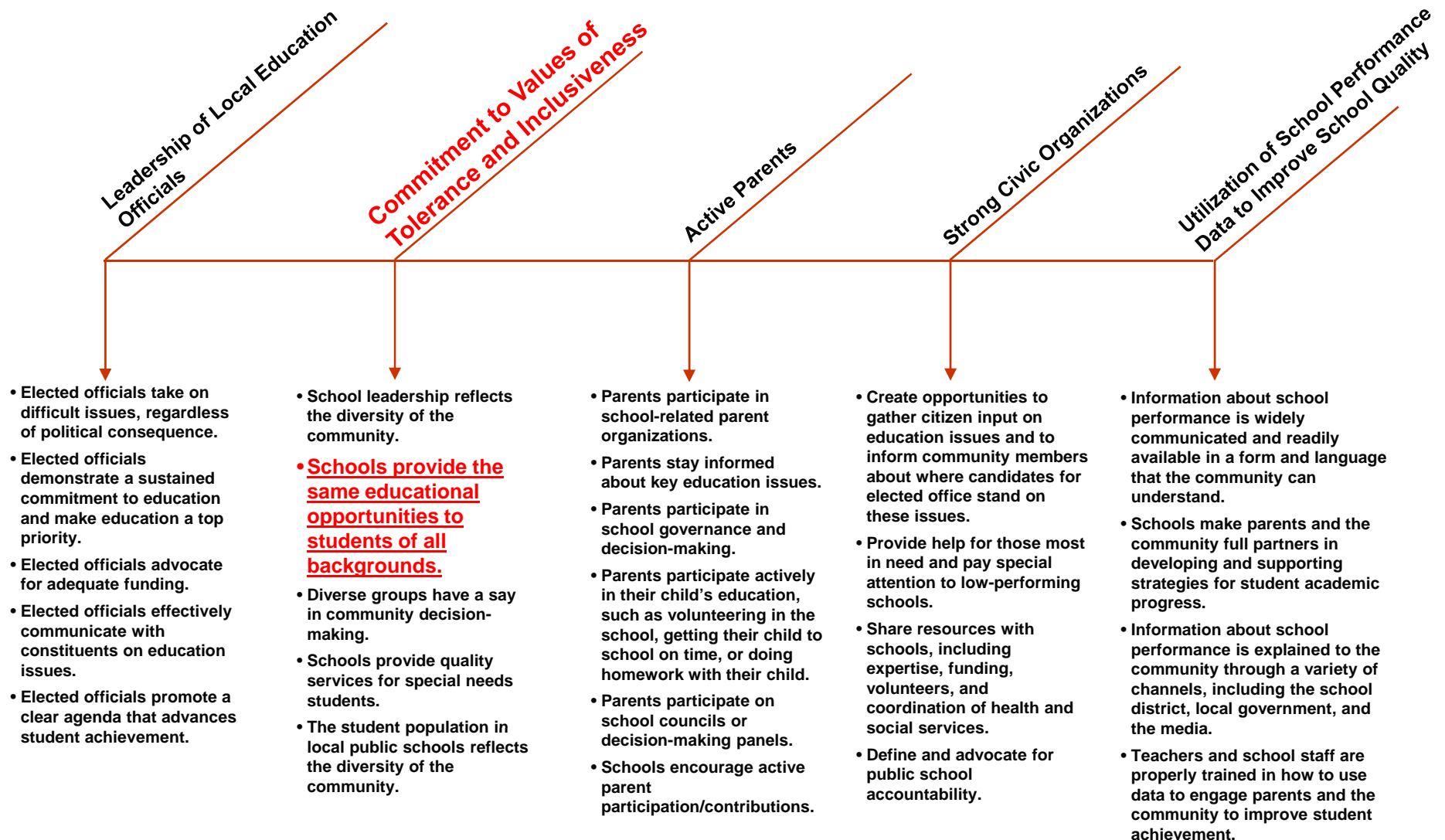
All on-line at: www.PublicEducation.org

National Civic Index Categories



- Education Leadership of Elected Officials
- Tolerance and Inclusiveness
- Active Parents
- Strong Civic Organizations
- Performance Data About the School/District
- Partnerships with Higher Education
- Knowledge of and Voting for School Board
- Active Business Community
- Youth Involvement
- Media Coverage

National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education



National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education

Components of the National Civic Index

Pre-developed poll questions

Example:

Index Category I:

1. Commitment to the Values of Tolerance and Inclusiveness

Indicator #1

- Schools provide the same educational opportunities to students of all backgrounds

Poll Question:

- Q. Public schools in your community provide equal educational opportunities for children of all economic backgrounds

National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education

Components of the National Civic Index

Additional Research

Example:

Index Category I:

1. Commitment to the Values of Tolerance and Inclusiveness

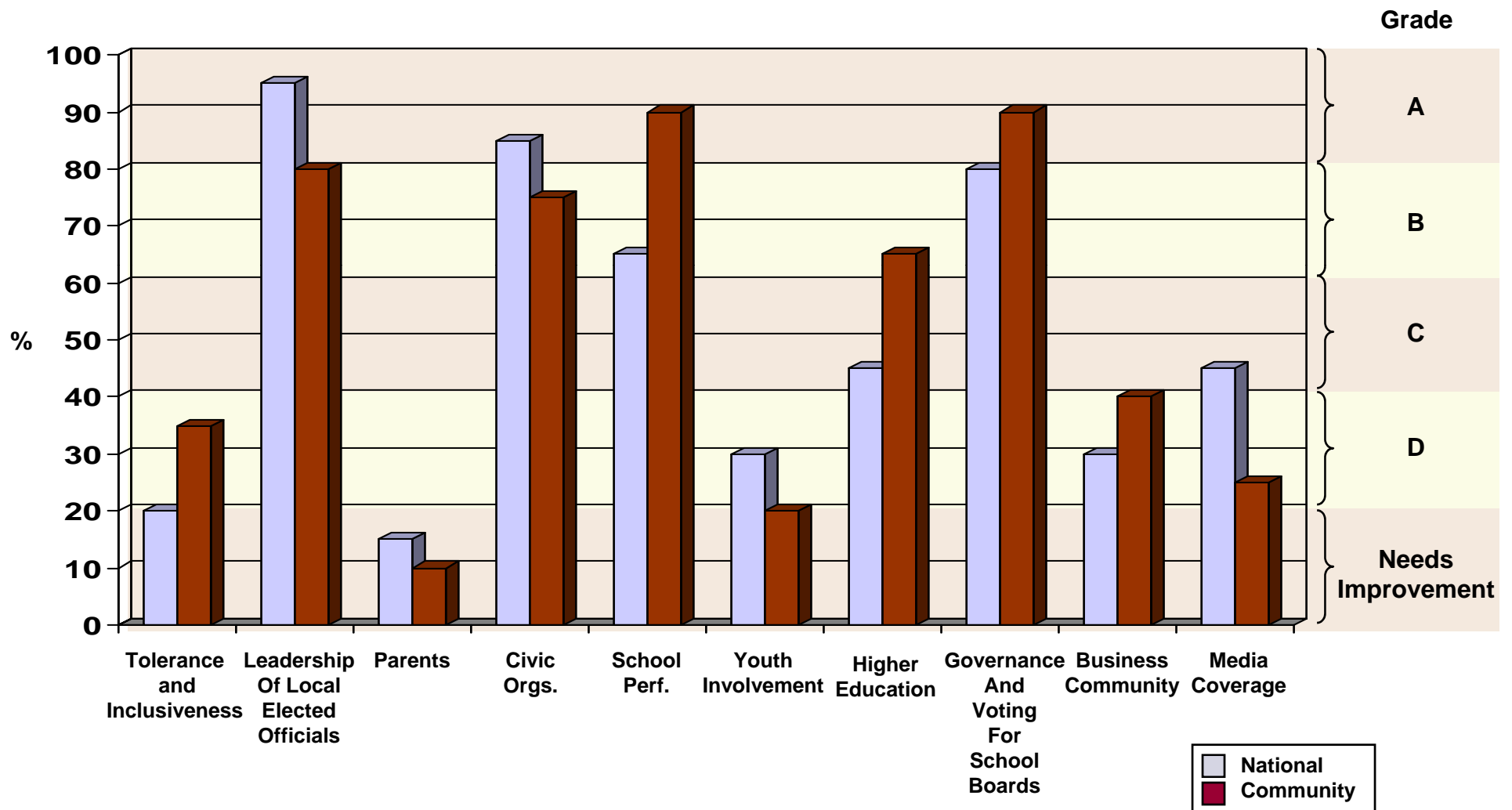
Indicator #1

- Low income and racial/ethnic minority organizations have a say in school and school district decision-making

Additional Research:

- Q. Public schools in your community provide equal educational opportunities for children of all economic backgrounds

Sample Results: Mix of Bar Chart and Report Card



National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education

Piloted in 5 school districts/areas in 2006/07

- **Denver/Adams County**
- **Paterson, New Jersey**
- **Mon Valley, Pennsylvania**
- **Seattle, Washington**
- **State of West Virginia**

National Civic Index (NCI) for a Quality Public Education

Some Lessons Learned

- **Conduct with other community organizations**
- **Requires approximately \$25,000 to administer the poll**
- **Be prepared for surprises: information is power**
- **Tool is flexible**
- **Maintain quality and assure that the poll is scientific**
- **Accommodate hard to reach populations**
- **Additional research is often required**
- **Administer in different languages depending on community**

LEF National Civic Index Success Story

The Education Alliance announces the release of

The West Virginia Civic Index Report



Wednesday, October 4, 2006
Embassy Suites Hotel
Charleston, West Virginia

10:30 to 11 a.m. Registration
11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Presentation
12 to 12:30 p.m. Q & A Session

Featured guest speaker:
Joshua E. Ulibarri

of Lake Research Associates, Washington, D.C.,
will outline the results of the Civic Index

Please confirm your attendance for this event
by contacting The Education Alliance at
1 (866) 31-4KIDS or
sheannasmith@educationalliance.org

About the Civic Index

This research is a pilot for a national Civic Index that measures the social capital and civic capacity of West Virginia and the nation. The survey provides scientifically-based information about public perceptions of public education and was conducted by the nationally-recognized Lake Research Associates in Washington, D.C. Matching funds for this project were provided by The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, MetLife and The Public Education Network.

★★★★★ Locally sponsored by ★★★★★



Public involvement. Public education. Public benefit.

Civic Index Endorsers and Supporters

- **American Association of School Administrators**
- **American Federation of Teachers**
- **America's Promise Alliance**
- **Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools**
- **CFLeads**
- **Coalition of Community Schools**
- **National Center for Learning and Citizenship**
- **National Commission on Teaching and America's Future**
- **National League of Cities**
- **National Parent Teacher Association**

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