

# YOUTH CIVIC AMBASSADOR



HISPANIC AUSTIN LEADERSHIP- CLASS OF 2019



**Greater Austin Hispanic  
Chamber of Commerce**



**PRESENTED BY:**  
SIERRA FERNANDES  
MARY LOU PEREZ-BROWN  
RYAN MELENDEZ  
LAURA PARDON  
SULLEY GUTIERREZ  
LILIANA LOZADA-BEVERIDO

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project Team	2
Executive Summary	4
Project Details	5
Sustainability of Project	9
Student Testimonials	10
Acknowledgments	11
Budget	12
Appendices	
Appendix 1: Student Materials	13
Appendix 2: County Curriculum	16
Appendix 3: County Resources	17
Appendix 4: City Curriculum	18
Appendix 5: City Resources	19
Appendix 6: State Curriculum	20
Appendix 7: State Resources	21
Appendix 8: Fundraising Letter	22

## PROJECT TEAM

### **Sierra Fernandes- Civic Engagement Project Manager**



Sierra was born and raised in San Antonio, TX. She attended the University of Texas at Austin Red McCombs School of Business where she received her undergraduate degree in Business Management. While attending UT, Sierra found a passion for helping others and decided to pursue a career working in non-profit. In 2011, Sierra started working at Girl Scouts of Central Texas with the Fall Product and Cookie Program as a Product Program Associate. After a couple of years, she was promoted to Product Program Manager and then Director of Product Programs. With Sierra's leadership, she has been able to help grow both the Fall and Cookie programs that serve over 11,000 girls in 46 counties in Central Texas.

### **Mary Lou Perez-Brown, CHES- Civic Engagement Project Administrator**



Mary Lou Perez-Brown was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. She attended The University of Texas at El Paso, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Science with a minor in Community Health. From a very young age, Mary Lou has always had a passion for helping her community and serving the poor and vulnerable and is able to this through her current organization. She holds a position as Project Manager for Ascension Seton, where she has worked for over 22 years in several job capacities. She continues to serve by volunteering her time with different non-profit organizations and provides outreach assistance to many throughout the community.

### **Liliana Lozada-Beverido- Civic Engagement Marketing Leader**



Liliana Lozada-Beverido has worked in the non-profit sector for the last six years. Co-Founder and Executive Director of 501c3 AMHIGA Hispana. She has also worked at Texas Organ Sharing Alliance as the Community Outreach Coordinator for the North Texas region, educating and empowering the community to save lives through organ donation. Beverido holds a bachelor's degree in communications sciences and has broad experience in project management, mass media, and public relations. Liliana is an NLP Coach and her passion is to guide and empower people to reach their full potential.



**Laura Alexandra Parton- Civic Engagement Information Leader**

Laura Alexandra Parton is an attorney originally from El Paso, Texas. Laura attended Texas Tech University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in History in 2014. She went on to law school at Texas Tech University School of Law, where she earned her Doctorate of Jurisprudence in 2017. Laura’s background is in public policy. She worked for Speaker Tom Craddick in the 83<sup>rd</sup> Regular Legislative Session and Speaker Joe Strauss in the 85<sup>th</sup> Regular Legislative Session. Between these two stints in the Texas Legislature, Laura moved to Washington DC, where she worked for Deputy Whip, Congressman Sam Johnson.

Laura currently works for The Fowler Law Firm, PC, where she practices civil litigation. Laura is very active in her local community. She currently is a member of the Austin Bar Association, Austin Young Lawyers Association, Still Loving It Lawyer’s Club™, and ELLA: Executive Latina’s Leadership Association. Laura is also a proud Rotarian as a member of the Northwest Austin Rotary Club.

**Sulley Gutierrez- Civic Engagement Finance Leader**



Sulley Gutierrez was born in Medford, Oregon but raised in Houston, Texas. She attended Texas State University from 2008–2013. While working on her bachelors, Sulley joined Bank of America in 2007 and found her passion helping small business clients as a AVP, Small Business Banker in Austin. During her time at Bank of America, Sulley has served several roles including Peer Coach, Operations Champion, Better Money Habits Champion, and currently serves as Hispanic/Latino Organization for Leadership and Advancement (HOLA) Co-Chair. She is also involved in Bank of America Community Volunteers, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Hispanic Austin Leadership Class of 2019. Sulley currently works as a Small Business Banker in Austin and lives in Kyle, TX with her husband José, and their Golden Fluffy.

**Ryan Melendez- Civic Engagement Marketing Leader**



Ryan Melendez is an Assistant-Vice-President and Market Leader with Branch Banking & Trust Co (BB&T), a community banking group for Austin and the surrounding areas. In this capacity, Ryan has responsibilities including business development, small business lending, client management, and community engagement. Ryan also serves as community leader in Austin. During his ten-year banking career, including eight years with BB&T Bank, Ryan’s primary focuses are to build long-term relationships as a trusted advisor with his clients and the community; manage a portfolio of retail and small

business clients; and have a strong understanding of his client’s banking, investment and insurance needs. Ryan was born in Caracas, Venezuela, has been in Texas since 1995, and attended Columbia Southern University. Ryan is an engaged community volunteer who currently serves on the board of EGBI Austin and supports various other community organizations in the Austin area. Ryan lives in Kyle, TX with his son Stuart and his daughter Rihanna, and their dog Scotts. In his free time, Ryan likes doing outdoor activities with his family.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Mission Statement:** To provide quality educational resources to high school-aged students in order to promote civic participation and engagement with a focus on the significance of voting and engaging politically at the local level.

**The Problem:** Our state is facing a challenge with young Texans low voting participation. In the 2016 elections, only 27.3% of Texans age 18-24 turned out to vote. Ura, A & Murphy, R (Feb. 23, 2018) *Why is Texas Voter Turnout So Low? Demographics Play a Big Role*, Texas Tribune  
<https://www.texastribune.org/2018/02/23/texas-voter-turnout-electorate-explainer/>

**Why is this a problem?** Looking at this in broader terms, in a report completed by UT Austin's Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life, Texans cite a dislike of the candidates and issues as the top reason for not voting in the 2016 election. Texan's discomfort with politics goes even deeper, when asked if they discuss politics with their family and friends, only 23% of Texans say they do so often—ranking Texas 50<sup>th</sup> in the Nation in such a metric. This study also found, that education correlated directly with civic involvement. The researchers recommend improving civic literacy in schools. *Texas Ranks Near Bottom for Political Participation and Civic Involvement*, UT NEWS (Feb. 14, 2018),  
<https://news.utexas.edu/2018/02/14/texas-ranks-near-bottom-for-political-and-civic-involvement/>.

**The Solution:** In partnership with YMCA Youth and Government program, our team created the Youth Civic Ambassador program. Our program connected Junior and Senior students at Akins High School and NYOS Charter School with local leaders by inviting local civil servants to speak about the county, city and state. This program provided students with the ability to connect with them, ask questions, and gain a more in-depth knowledge about local civic engagement. We provided students with a pre-questionnaire, curriculum on the county, city, state, post-questionnaire and a one sheet resource page with task for students to complete. At the end of the program sessions students were awarded a certificate of completion.

**The Results:** After completing our program both students at NYOS Charter School and Akins High School post-questionnaire scores doubled their pre-questionnaire scores with an increased average of 78%. Results showed that students were not familiar with how their local government worked.

**Next steps:** We have presented the project to our partner, the YMCA Texas Youth & Government program, who is excited about taking on the Youth Civic Ambassador Program as a student-led initiative. We are currently working on restructuring the curriculum to make it applicable state-wide. The next step will be to launch this program in 20 schools in the Austin Metropolitan area and to 3600 students state wide.

## PROJECT DETAILS

The HAL Civic Engagement Team partnered with the YMCA Youth and Government—a statewide civic education and leadership program—to create the Youth Civic Ambassador program. Youth Civic Ambassador program connects high school students with local civil servants at the city, county, and state level. Our goal is to educate on the vital role of civic participation, empowering them to become ambassadors in their community. We also hope that students use the resources provided to stay informed on the decisions being considered by their elected leaders, and even consider public service as a potential career.

### Schools

Not Your Ordinary School (NYOS) Charter School- North Austin- 15 Junior students  
 Akins High School- South Austin- 56 Junior & Senior students



### Lecturers & Sessions

We contacted local individuals who work in a specific area of government (county, city, state) to present at each session. We gave our lecturers full license to discuss their experience, but asked that they answer general questions: What inspired you to work in the public sector? What decisions do you have a hand in that impact these kids' lives? Why is civic engagement vital to our society?

Each session began with a pre-questionnaire, then a short introduction to different local political divisions (city, county, and state), a lecturer, post-questionnaire and concluding with a call to action.

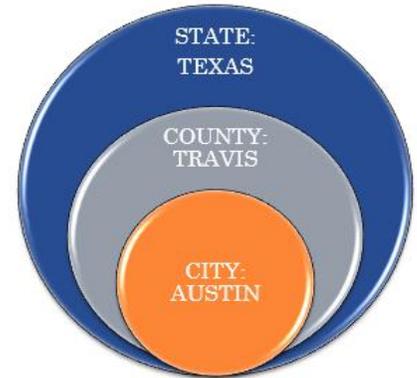
- Feb. 14 - NYOS, County Lecture
- Feb. 21 - NYOS, City Lecture
- Feb. 28- NYOS, State Lecture
- April 4th-10:15 AM Akins High School, Three Session Government Lecture
- April 4th - 11:50 AM Akins High School, Lecture Three Session Government Lecture

## CURRICULUM

Our curriculum focused on how the decisions made at the local level impact the lives of these students, their peers, and their families. Additionally, we brought in elected or executive officials from each governmental division.

It was our hope that by putting a face to the leaders that are making these every-day impactful decisions it would motivate the students to take the time to familiarize themselves with their own elected officials and candidates, and maybe even encourage them to consider a career in public service.

We chose the local level for a few different reasons: first, these are the elections and functions of government that are most often overlooked by the education system and the media; and second, we really felt that these governmental bodies are the ones making the most impactful decisions to these kids and their families' everyday lives; and third, our goal is to put faces on these decision makers, that was a much more attainable goal at these levels.



### Each student received a packet of information that included (Appendix 1-7):

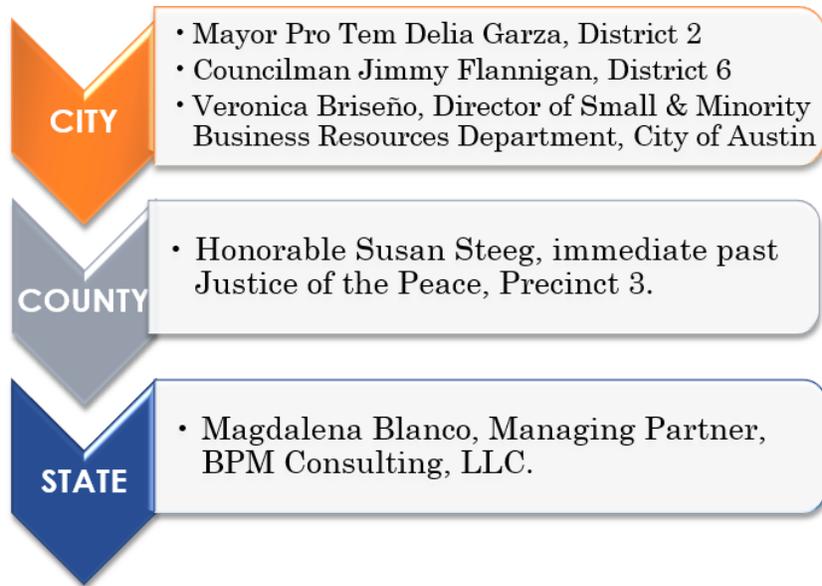
- Agenda
- Pre/Post Questionnaire
- Curriculum Worksheet
- Resources & Call to Action

### Resources & Call to Action

We provided students a one-page resource sheet for each level of government. Each sheet included a call to action so that students would engage with their local community.

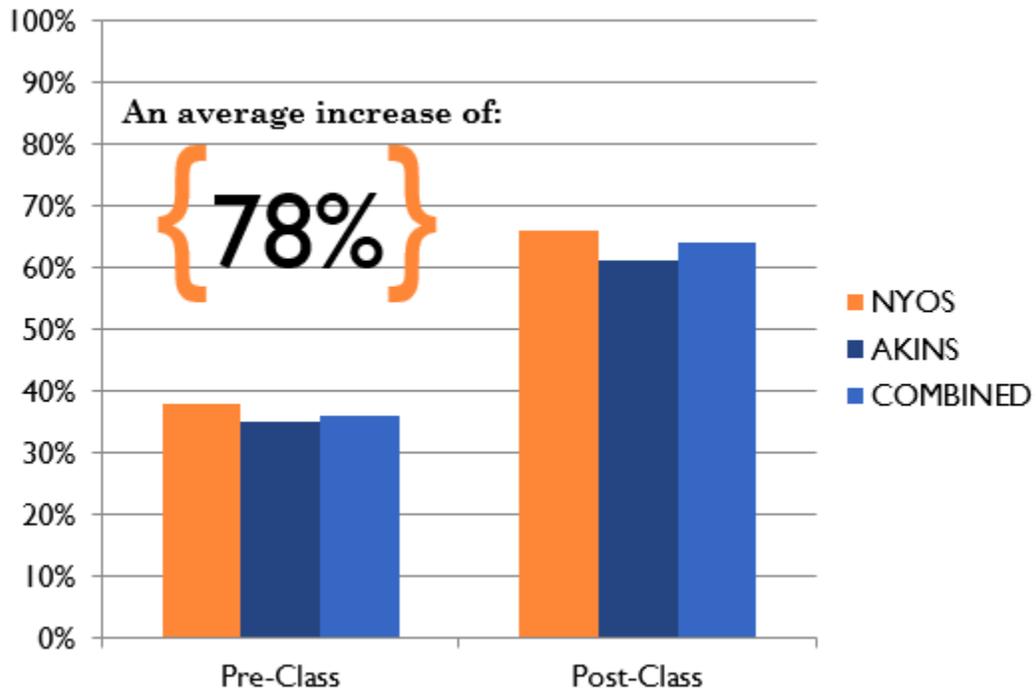


## GUEST LECTURERS



## OUTCOME

After our curriculum was presented and our guest lecturers spoke, the student's questionnaire score increased by a combined average of 78%.



## RESULTS

Pre-Questionnaire: NYOS, 38%; Akins, 35%; Avg. 36%

Post-Questionnaire: NYOS, 66%; Akins, 61%; Avg. 64%



## SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT

The Youth Civic Ambassador program held local government sessions at both NYOS and Akins that connected students to resources—County, City and State. During each session students received a list of resources with a weekly call to action. Students also took pre and post questionnaires to measure their level of knowledge in these areas of government. Although the results from each student differed substantially, each session dealt with information relevant to their local government that provided them with a better understanding of what each area of government did.

Our program showed significant and sustainable results because of the curriculum provided and having leaders in our community who spoke to the students on what they do and how important civic engagement should be in their lives.

Youth Civic Ambassador program had an impact on high school aged students and has gained interest from our partner organization. In meeting with the YMCA, they discussed incorporating the Youth Civic Ambassador program as a student led initiative. The YMCA Youth and Government State Director, Angela Castilleja would like the Civic Engagement Team to develop a generic format of this program to make it applicable state wide.

The next step will be to launch this program in 20 schools in the Austin Metropolitan area and to 3600 students state wide.

For more information and access to the Youth Civic Ambassador program resources, email [YouthCivicAmbassadors@gmail.com](mailto:YouthCivicAmbassadors@gmail.com).



**Texas Youth and Government**  
Democracy must be learned by each generation.

## STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

“Thank you for taking and giving your time to teach us. I’ve learned so much”. – Katherine

“You were great”. Thank you! – Laura

‘You all are great. This stuff is so important’. -Love Savannah

“Thank you so much for teaching us a little of what you do. I’ve learned so much”. Jaqueline

“I learned so much. Thank you for your time.” -Laurel

“Thank you all for the time you took to come out and educate us. I think what you are doing is very cool and important. I learned more about public policy in Texas than I did from an entire semester in U.S. Government”. -Olivia

“I appreciate the time and effort you’ve spent to teach us!”. -Anthony



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to the following mentors and organizations for their support. Our project would not have been a success without their assistance.

- ▶ Missy Garcia, YMCA- Texas Youth and Government
- ▶ NYOS Charter School
- ▶ Akins High School
- ▶ Luis Delgado, The Critical Update
- ▶ Dr. Nora Comstock
- ▶ Matt Flores Jr., Voter Registration Outreach & Training Coordinator
- ▶ BB&T
- ▶ Bank of America
- ▶ Girl Scouts of Central Texas
- ▶ Ascension Seton
- ▶ BCO Consulting Group
- ▶ Chris Cordova, Foundation Communities
- ▶ Geronimo Rodriguez, Ascension Seton
- ▶ The Fowler Law Firm, PC
- ▶ Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Hispanic Austin Leadership
- ▶ Confetti Graphic Design



**Texas Youth and Government**  
Democracy must be learned by each generation.



**Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**



**BANK OF AMERICA**



# PROJECT BUDGET

<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Total</b>
Greater Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Hispanic Austin Leadership	Project Supplies	<b>\$78.56</b>
Garcia-Gutierrez Family	Check payable to YMCA	Donation	\$200.00
BB&T	Backpacks & water	Donation	\$1108.50
Girl Scouts of Central Texas	Cookies	Donation	\$96.00
Bank of America	Bank of America Online Match to YMCA	Donation	\$200.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$1525.94</b>



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: STUDENT MATERIAL

All students were given a pre-questionnaire at the beginning of the information session to measure how knowledgeable the students were in the curriculum material being taught that day. After our guest lecturers had presented, students were then given a post-questionnaire and all data was collected.

---

### PRE/POST QUESTIONNAIRE

What is larger: The City of Austin or the County of Travis?

- A. Austin
- B. Travis

Who makes decisions for Travis County?

- A. Commissioners Court
- B. City Council
- C. Justice of the Peace
- D. The District Attorney's Office

How many people sit on the Travis Commissioners Court?

- A. 3 Commissioners
- B. 5 Commissioners
- C. 4 Commissioners and the County Judge
- D. 7 Commissioners including the County Judge

The Travis County District Court judges are elected to what terms?

- A. Two-year terms with a two-term limit
- B. Two-year terms with a four-term limit
- C. Four-year terms with a two-term limit
- D. Four-year terms with no limits

Who keeps track of the Travis County's land records?

- A. The Constable's Office
- B. The County Judge
- C. The County Clerk
- D. The Probate Court

What law-enforcement agency has state-wide jurisdiction?

- A. The Sherriff's Office
- B. The Probate Court
- C. The Department of Public Safety
- D. The Constable's Office

How do we select our Texas Supreme Court judges?

- A. They are elected
- B. They are appointed by the Governor
- C. They are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate
- D. They are appointed by the Senate

How many individuals are elected to the Texas House of Representatives?

- A. 80
- B. 100
- C. 150
- D. 200

How often does the Texas Legislature meet?

- A. 200 days a year
- B. 170 days a year
- C. 140 days every other year
- D. 220 days every other year

Who implements Austin city policy?

- A. Mayor
- B. City Council
- C. Manager
- D. All the above

Who decides Austin city policy?

- A. Mayor
- B. City Council
- C. Manager
- D. A and B
- E. B and C

Can Austin pass an ordinance to allowing electric scooters if Texas has a law banning scooters?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Austin's Mayor serves what length terms?

- A. Two-year terms with a three-term limit
- B. Two-year terms with no limit
- C. Three-year terms with a two-term limit
- D. Four-year terms with a two-term limit

Austin has how many City-Council districts?

- A. 5
- B. 7
- C. 10
- D. 15

Who runs the executive branch in Texas?

- A. The Governor
- B. The Governor and appointed officers
- C. The Governor and independently-elected officers
- D. The Governor and the Lieutenant Governor

Texas has both a bicameral legislature and a bifurcated Court System?

- A. True
- B. False

How often do we have a Texas Gubernatorial election?

- A. Every two years on odd-numbered years
- B. Every two years on even numbered years
- C. Every four even-numbered years with the presidential election
- D. Every four even-numbered years without a presidential election

What does the Railroad Commission handle primarily?

- A. Mining
- B. Train and Freight systems
- C. Oil and Gas
- D. Both A and B
- E. Both A and C

What Amendment to the United States Constitution proscribes the powers reserved for the state?

- A. 6th Amendment
- B. 10th Amendment
- C. 19th Amendment
- D. 21st Amendment

Who runs the Texas House and the Senate?

- A. The Speaker Pro Tem and the Parliamentarian
- B. The Speaker and the Majority Leader
- C. The Speaker and the Lieutenant Governor
- D. The Speaker and the Comptroller



# Appendix 2: County Curriculum— Travis County

Texas is of 254 counties. Travis County is shown below:



The County is much larger than the City. Austin is the largest City in Travis County and it is its “County Seat.”

## What does the County do and who elects these people?

### Commissioners Court

The Travis County Commissioners Court and county judge are the chief policy-making and administrative branch of county government. Among their many functions, the court sets the tax rate, determines fees for many county services, and determines how the collected revenues will be distributed among different county departments to provide services to the community.

The Commissioners Court has five (5) members— four (4) Commissioners and the County Judge. The Commissioners are elected by their district; the County Judge’s election is county-wide. They are all elected for staggered four-year terms.

The County passes ordinances and regulations pertaining to emergency services, parks, housing, and land development.

### Judicial System

Our main State Court system is based on Counties. Travis County runs the JP Court, Juvenile Court, Civil Court, Criminal Court, and Probate Court. The County also runs the District Attorney’s office, the prosecutorial body for our area. The County also controls the Sherriff’s Office and the Constable’s Office.

Judges are elected to four-year terms. Travis County has Seventeen (17) District Courts, One Probate Court, and One County Court, and eight (8) County Courts at law.

### Tax Assessor-Collector

The County runs the Tax Assessor-Collector’s Office. They assess and collect your property taxes for a variety of different taxing authorities. The Tax Assessor-Collector is also in charge of voter registration.

### County Clerk

The County clerk keeps track of the land records and other vital statistics—the County gives you your marriage license for example.

## Appendix 3: County Resources

### How to learn about the Travis County Commissioners Court?

Go to their website! <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/commissioners-court>

Learn about each elected commissioner, for example the County Judge's page is here:

<https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/commissioners-court/county-judge>

View Commissioners Court meeting schedule: <http://traviscountyclerk.org/eclerk/Content.do?code=meeting-calendar>

View Commissioners Court upcoming agendas:

<https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/commissioners-court/upcoming-agenda-items>

View archived video of each voting session: <http://traviscountyclerk.org/eclerk/Content.do?code=meeting-videos>

**TASK:** Go find one matter the Commissioners Court will act on and discuss with your peers.

### How to learn more about the Travis County Judicial System?

Go to their website: <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/courts>

**TASK:** Go find one Travis County District Court Judge and how long they have been serving and discuss with your peers.

### When election time rolls around, how do I learn about the candidates?

There are many resources to educate you about the elections and candidates:

Ballotpedia: [https://ballotpedia.org/Austin,\\_Texas](https://ballotpedia.org/Austin,_Texas)

League of Women Voters, Austin Area: <https://lwvaustin.org/voter-guide/>

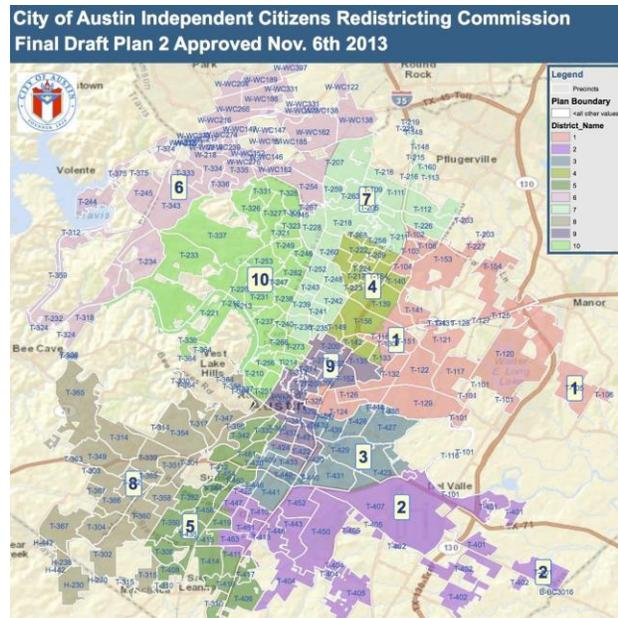
The Texas Tribune: <https://www.texastribune.org/series/texas-elections-2018/>

The Austin Chronicle: <https://www.austinchronicle.com/elections/>

**TASK:** Look up running candidates, what are they passionate about? What are some issues they are working on? Are there any issues you believe they should be working on?

# Appendix 4: City Curriculum— Austin, Texas

Texas is comprised of 961 cities. Austin is comprised of the colored portions below:



**Council**—Austin has ten (10) council districts, and only the people who live in a district can vote for its seat. They are also limited to two (2) four-year terms, but their elections are staggered. Half of the council seats are up for election every two (2) years.

**Manager** – The City Manager is not independently elected but appointed by the Council.

### What does the City do?

The City develops its own sort of laws, called ordinances, resolutions, or code. It even has its own court system, municipal court. The City is also in charge of the Police Department.

The Council establishes advisory boards and commissions to advise them. These seats are appointed by the Council and are not elected. They do not make any decisions, but they review debate and comment on city policy.

City policy covers a wide range of decision making. Some examples of notable Austin City Ordinances are:

- Austin’s Paid-Sick-Leave ordinance
- Austin’s LGBTQ Anti-Discrimination ordinance
- Austin’s Anti-Homeless ordinance
- Austin’s Dockless Mobility ordinance
- Austin’s Plastic Bag Ban
- Austin’s Hands-Free ordinance
- Austin’s FBI Background check for driver’s ordinance

Can Austin pass a law about anything then? –

-NO! Because of a concept known as “preemption” Austin cannot pass a law where there is already an existing Texas or Federal law.

### City Government

The City of Austin operates under a Council-Manager form of government whereby the elected City Council sets policy objectives and appoints the City Manager who ensures they are carried out and administered effectively. The Mayor leads the City Council and is the political face of the city.

**Mayor** – Presides over the Council, leads goals and policy priorities.

**Council** – Votes on goals, direction, and policy to instruct the Manager.

**Manager** –Implements the council’s policies.

### How do these people get elected?

**Mayor**—The mayor is elected by popular vote of all eligible Austin residents. He serves a four (4) year term which is limited to being renewed only once.

---

## Appendix 5: City Resources

### How to learn about the Austin City Council?

Go to their website! <http://austintexas.gov/government>

Read about each elected councilmember, for example the Mayor's page is here:  
<http://austintexas.gov/department/mayor>

View the City Council meeting schedule: <http://www.austintexas.gov/government/meeting-schedule>

View the City Council agenda: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/city-manager/agenda>

You can learn about how citizens can participate at council meetings here:  
<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/citizen-participation-council-meetings>

**TASK:** Go find one matter the City Council is currently considering and discuss with your peers.

### How to learn more about the Austin City Code?

You can find the code here: <http://www.austintexas.gov/resident/city-code>

Common violations are explained here: <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/common-austin-code-violations>

**TASK:** Go find one code that you did not previously know about and discuss with your peers.

### When election time rolls around, how do I learn about the candidates?

There are many resources to educate you about the elections and candidates, try:

Ballotpedia: [https://ballotpedia.org/Austin, Texas](https://ballotpedia.org/Austin,_Texas)

League of Women Voters, Austin Area: <https://lwvaustin.org/voter-guide/>

The Texas Tribune: <https://www.texastribune.org/series/texas-elections-2018/>

The Austin Chronicle: <https://www.austinchronicle.com/elections/>

**TASK:** Look up running candidates, what are they passionate about? What are some issues they are working on? Are there any issues you believe they should be working on?



## Appendix 7: State Resources

### How to learn about the Texas Legislature?

Go to their website! <https://capitol.texas.gov/Home.aspx>

TLO – Texas Legislature Online

- You can find your legislator with the “Who Represents Me?” field.
- You can see live and archived broadcast of the House, Senate, and Committee meetings.
- You can look up bills by bill number or key word.
- You can see the Texas Constitution, all Texas Statutes, and the House and Senate Journals dating back to 1995.

**TASK:** Look up your representative, what are they passionate about? What are some bills they are working on? Are there any bills you believe they should be working on?

### How to learn more about the judges of Texas’s Highest Courts?

Learn about the Supreme Court, the latest news, or search cases: <http://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/>

Or, for the Court of Criminal Appeals: <http://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/>

### Who are Texas’ independently elected executives? Fill in the blanks

Governor \_\_\_\_\_ : <https://gov.texas.gov/>

Attorney General – \_\_\_\_\_ : <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/>

Texas Railroad Commissioners— \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ :  
<https://www.rrc.state.tx.us/>

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts – \_\_\_\_\_ : <https://comptroller.texas.gov/>

Texas Land Commissioner— \_\_\_\_\_ : <http://www.glo.texas.gov/the-glo/about/overview/index.html>

### When election time rolls around, how do I learn about the candidates?

Ballotpedia: [https://ballotpedia.org/Austin,\\_Texas](https://ballotpedia.org/Austin,_Texas)

League of Women Voters, Austin Area: <https://lwvaustin.org/voter-guide/>

The Texas Tribune: <https://www.texastribune.org/series/texas-elections-2018/>

The Austin Chronicle: <https://www.austinchronicle.com/elections/>

Or look for endorsements from organizations you trust, like the . . .



## Appendix 8: FUNDRAISING LETTER

Dear Donor,

Our state is facing a challenge with young Texans voting participation. Texas is a state of high youth population, the third-lowest median age in the country. Once Texans do turn 18 years old, they vote at much lower percentages than the rest of the voting population. In the 2016 elections, only 27.3% of Texans age 18-24 turned out to vote. Compare that to 37.5% of Texans (25-34); 42.9% (35-44); 56.5% (45-64); and 65% of Texans 65+. When compared to local elections the numbers are much lower.

With the increase in young Texans turning 18 every year, it's our responsibility to equip them with the knowledge to make educated decisions. After all their vote will impact our day to day lives. One local organization, YMCA Youth and Government program does just that. It looks to inform and educate our youth on voting and government process. However, once students leave the program, they don't have a way to connect it to their community.

Youth Civic Ambassador program looks to connect students in the YMCA program with local leaders by inviting Civil Servants to speak. This program will provide students with the ability to connect with them, ask questions, and gain a more in-depth knowledge about local civic engagement. We will be working with Akins High School and NYOS Charter School. To accomplish this mission in our community and State of Texas, we need your help to make it happen. Your support is crucial to our efforts to solve this voting gap in Texas.

If you are able, we'd love if you could donate to help us achieve our mission. Our goal is \$1500 that will be used for teaching supplies, snacks, etc. Remaining balance after our sessions with the students will be donated to the YMCA program for scholarships.

Checks or Money Orders- Payable to Hispanic Austin Leadership with "Youth Civic Ambassadors" program in the memo.

Thank you for your support,

Youth Civic Ambassador Program Members