

CIVICS IN THE NEWS

Impeachment proceedings continue, with a trial in the Senate scheduled to begin soon. Click [here](#) to stay up to date on the proceedings. As the trial progresses, the new Biden administration will be trying to enact their agenda through legislation and executive orders. Visit [iCivics](#) for a quick lesson on executive orders and the role of the legislative and judicial branches.

Climate change remains one of the top issues motivating youth civic engagement, with a focus on the inequitable burden placed on communities of color. **Robert Bullard**, "father of environmental justice" spoke on the intersection of racial justice and climate justice last year with **Texas Climate News**, reaffirming that people of color must be at the forefront of the movement so that it remains equitable. Texans of color already tend to face greater impacts of natural disasters, as well as living closer to major pollution centers. Protesting climate inaction, over a dozen states recently sued the Environmental Protection Agency for failing to increase standards for air pollution. See some of the young Black activists leading the charge [here](#).

Black youth across the country have been advocating for an expanded and more comprehensive teaching of Black history, one that acknowledges the racial disparities of the present. Texas does not require that students learn about Black history annually, putting many of our youth at a massive civic disadvantage during a time characterized by calls for racial justice and equity. Despite the lack of Black history formally taught in many schools across the country, in 2020 we saw a substantial increase in youth civic engagement due to widespread calls for racial justice after the murder of George Floyd.

For more resources aimed at educators, please see page 2.



TX CIVIC EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

FEB. 2021

As a new administration takes office, we cannot forget the rise in brazen white nationalism that has always been an insidious force in the United States – one that requires a strengthened commitment to democracy and comprehensive civic education to combat. This month, we are centering Black voices to celebrate the Black history both of the past and that is currently in the making.

Keep reading for upcoming events and see the following page for resources for educators to share with students and facilitate discussion.

1. Join **Jolt Action** from March 6th–8th for their **2021 Texas Power Up Summit** where young Texans can learn more about organizing, the legislative session, and progressive issues. Register [here](#).
2. The **TX Senate Redistricting Committee** has begun virtual hearings after public pressure to hear from Texans. Redistricting only happens every ten years so it is vital that we make our voices heard to ensure every Texan has fair representation. Sign up to speak [here](#).
3. **CDF-Texas** is tracking bills related to civic education that have been filed in the Texas legislature. See our list [here](#). Please add comments to any bills that are of particular interest.

Click [here](#) to add someone to or unsubscribe from our mailing list. Want to see your announcement in next month's newsletter? Contact **Maggie Stern** at mstern@childrensdefense.org.



TEACHING THROUGH A CRISIS

With the reopening of schools being a major priority for the new administration, teachers may be wondering how to tailor their approach to reflect new political and cultural realities. We hope this brief collection of resources on Black history, impeachment, and civics can provide crucial guidance to you this month.

Educators for Social Change

A [collection of lesson plans, articles, and information](#) sites about the history of impeachment and how some educators have stepped away from the standard curriculum.

MyNorthwest

[Read](#) three experts in history and education weigh in on the lack of civic education in our schools and the danger of ignorance exemplified in the January insurrection.

Center for Racial Justice

A [resource guide](#) with a variety of lesson plans and curriculum resources. This guide includes articles that discuss the importance of teaching Black Lives Matter in our schools, the inclusion of Afro-Latinos in our Black history discussions, the struggles of Black women and girls, and the necessary inclusion of Black LGBTQ+ figures this month. [Additional resources](#) are linked at the bottom.

1619 Project

A [journalism project](#) from **Nikole Hannah-Jones** of the **New York Times** examining the central role of the oppression of Black people in the development of the United States.

Amanda Gorman

Amanda Gorman, the first National Youth Poet Laureate, gave a powerful performance at the inauguration. Click [here](#) for a thread with lesson plans that focus on her work and that of other Black poets.

*These resources are still being updated and not every link in each guide has been vetted by CDF-Texas. Please exercise discretion in identifying relevant & culturally responsive resources.

Read more about intentional and equity-focused teaching in this moment [here](#).