



## CULMINATING ACTIVITY: TOWARD A MORE PERFECT COMMUNITY

(60 minutes — possibly an ongoing service-learning project)

### OBJECTIVE

Groups of students compose an overview of their community, choose a campaign for a specific area of improvement, and plan a service project.

### MATERIALS

*Toward a More Perfect Community* handout

### GET READY

- ✓ Divide your class into groups of four students.
- ✓ Duplicate a copy of the *Toward a More Perfect Community* handout for each student.
- ✓ Obtain telephone access for local calls during class time (optional).

### INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Say, *A city in the western United States discovered recently that only 12% of its eligible voters had cast a ballot in the last mayoral election. If the youngest voters (18-25 years old) had turned out as a block, they could have elected their own candidates for mayor and city council.*
- ✓ Tell the class to assume that the youngest voters have done just that. Each group of four now represents a youth-oriented mayor and city council.
- ✓ Say to the groups, *Your job is to look at your community, evaluate its strengths and weaknesses, and choose one aspect of life in your community that needs improvement. Each group will develop a service project plan for the community aspect that needs improvement.*

- ✓ Tell your students to use the *Toward a More Perfect Community* handout to evaluate the community and to develop their service project plans.
- ✓ Inform students that their plans will require them to create a budget and to figure out how to include other students, faculty and administration, local businesses, local government agencies and/or the media in their plans.
- ✓ Have the groups present their plans, both in writing to the teacher and orally to the class.
- ✓ Have the class select a project that seems feasible and that will have an impact: ask, *How can we pursue one of these projects? What would be the fairest way for the class to select the one we want to pursue?* (Students can vote by secret ballot or by a show of hands.)
- ✓ Once a project has been selected, have your students further develop the plan of action as a class. They should brainstorm everything that needs to happen for the project to become a reality.
- ✓ Have your students implement their plan of action.



## CULMINATING ACTIVITY: TOWARD A MORE PERFECT COMMUNITY (continued)

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Which attributes of our town were most commonly cited as strengths?*
- ★ *Which attributes of our town were most commonly cited for needing improvement?*
- ★ *Is there any common thread to be found in the areas students chose for improvement?*
- ★ *Is that the area for improvement we chose?*
- ★ *What group's plan of action did we choose? Why do you think this project plan was selected?*
- ★ *What impact did our service project have on the community issue? Did our project turn out as planned?*
- ★ *If in an election cycle: Which candidates in this election seem to agree with our programs of reform? What are they saying in their campaigns about "our" issues? Which of them might help us with our projects?*

### MORE!

Send the plans to the mayor and/or the city council, either by mail or e-mail. (Many city Web sites offer direct posting of e-mail to city officials. Go to <http://www.statelocalgov.net/>, if you have Web access, to see whether your community has a Web site.) Invite parents to a presentation of the "More Perfect Community" project after its completion. Students could prepare refreshments, decorations, and banners. Invite local officials and school district leaders to the presentation.



## TOWARD A MORE PERFECT COMMUNITY

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Community Weaknesses: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of Focus For Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description: \_\_\_\_\_

### BUDGET

Costs: \_\_\_\_\_

Revenue sources: \_\_\_\_\_

How we will involve students, faculty, media, businesses and local government:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_