Twitter Thread by RAND Corporation



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We're living in an era of #TruthDecay: Americans increasingly disagree about basic facts. This can have dire consequences.

Civic education is key to reversing the course. Our new report identifies ways to spark an American civics revival. [thread]

Let's start by defining "civics." You might be thinking of lessons from your high school government class. But our research explores a much broader set of skills (e.g., critical thinking, communication) that help students engage in democracy in an active and informed way.

We recently surveyed U.S. social studies teachers to learn more about:

■ the state of civic education and media literacy in public schools
═■the challenges teachers face in promoting kids' civic development
■■ ways to enhance civic learning opportunities for students.

Here are just 4 of the opportunities we identified to help promote civic development in schools:

1■■Think outside the textbook.

Hands-on experiences, such as school-based elections and mock trials, could be used more often to engage students and help them learn about democracy.

2■■Incorporate civic education into other subjects.

Many teachers said that pressure to cover other subjects was a barrier to teaching civics. But there are ways to weave civics lessons into other subjects, including language arts and math.

3■■Embrace controversy.

Teachers could use social & emotional learning practices to guide students through discussions of controversial topics in a safe & respectful way. This could help kids learn how to have productive conversations about tough subjects—rather than

avoid them.

4■■Help teachers deliver equitable and inclusive civic education.

Overall, teachers need more support to promote students' civic development. But this is especially true for teachers in schools that serve more students of color and low-income students.

These actions are central to reviving civic education in America’s public schools. But they're just one part of the larger effort to rebuild our civic infrastructure and restore the role of facts in public life.

"As we've seen throughout history, policies are shaped by the events that precede them,” says author @juliahkaufman.
“Education policy could help us address the #TruthDecay crisis, but it's going to take changes that scale across the country.”

Check out our full report on civic education—with insights from America's teachers about:

■how they promote civic development
■the barriers they face
■what they're observing in their students.

https://t.co/O22eNbL5lj

And find more information about all things #TruthDecay here.■ /end https://t.co/n1biR5pXzU