

Gears Model Diversity Chat

The United States is a federal republic, which means that certain powers are reserved to the federal government (United States), while state governments, such as Florida, and local governments, such as the city of Miami, have other powers.

Civic education is a matter for each state to regulate. Of the 50 states in the U.S., 31 require a semester of civics education, 8 states and D.C. require a full year, while Hawaii requires a year and a half. The other 10 states require minimal or no civics education as a high school graduation requirement.¹

In the case of Florida, its government in 2021 significantly boosted civics education in the state. The government allocated a considerable number of resources to this subject. For its part, the state legislature has approved legislation that reformulates the standards for civics courses and the civics curriculum, in addition to including the passing of a civics exam as a requirement for high school graduation.

Polidore is convinced that each student should take a civics course as part of their academic training. The main topics to be covered in the curriculum range from the structure of government, its functioning, the basic principles of a democracy and the importance of rights and obligations that contribute to peaceful coexistence in diversity.

The two fundamental pillars of our pact are to promote understanding, the importance of the Rule of Law and the adoption of a Culture of Lawfulness. With the objective of strengthening the pact, the Diversity Chat program seeks to encourage young representatives of the immigrant population and the communities that receive them to reflect on the realities they face in their daily lives through the exchange of ideas and perspectives based on civic education.

This program creates a new channel of communication between young people from different backgrounds. In addition, it encourages critical thinking, the ability to argue respectfully and to learn from each other. It is also very important for students to understand the values and historical events that underpin rights, responsibilities, and civic obligations.

The program will begin in the city of Miami, however, it may later be held in other locations throughout the United States.

¹ <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/strengthening-democracy-modern-civics-education/>

How does this program contribute to accomplishing our mission and vision?

Through a friendly, playful, and enriching activity, this program allows young people who would not normally talk to each other by other means, to communicate with each other, understand each other's background, culture and context. The program creates the opportunity to understand the other and increases the chances of being accepted and reducing the fear of the unknown.

By encouraging the exchange of different youth perspectives and opinions, Polidore enhances understanding within the Inter-Cultural Community.

The Diversity Chat program uses a five-piece Poli-Gear Model ⚙ process:

1. Open Call ⚙

Our Diversity Chat program matches a young immigrant with a young member of the receiving community. To this end, Polidore will hold an open call for such young people to participate in the program.

The process seeks to bring together young people who live in different circumstances and come from diverse backgrounds, with the aim of encouraging the exchange of ideas, enriching each other's cultures, and understanding different contexts and perspectives.

To invite young people to participate, Polidore will implement this program working hand in hand with unified school districts, universities and community organizations.

2. Reflections ⚙

The organization will provide participants with a series of pre-selected topics to choose from and write a short reflection from a personal perspective. The list of topics will be drawn from the civic education course guidelines approved by the appropriate Department of Education that are aligned with Polidore's mission and vision.

For the writing of the reflection, participants should explain one or more of the selected topics, and the impact this topic has on their daily life according to their personal circumstances.

3. Correspondence ✨

In all cases, Polidore will connect a young immigrant with a young member of the receiving community so that, based on the selected topic, a chat communication is fostered.

During this stage, each participant will first receive the reflection of his or her counterpart. This will be a first approach to a different reality and perspective on a topic that affects both parties.

After the exchange of reflections, the young people will be asked to write a personal letter to their new contact, explaining what they have learned and the reasons why they agree or disagree with the reflection.

4. Conclusions ✨

After analyzing each reflection, as well as each letter sent by the youth, Polidore will draft a document reflecting the concerns, suggestions, challenges, and opportunities that arose during the correspondence exchange.

Polidore will pay particular attention to understanding how the youth approach civic issues and identified the values that underpin these relevant issues.

5. Meeting ✨

Once Polidore has drafted the findings, a meeting will be held where the youth will have the opportunity to meet their counterparts as well as other program participants.

During this event, the youth will share their experiences on the topics discussed and identify ways to improve understanding and communication among them.