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## Mikva Challenge Launches a Youth Civic Engagement Initiative

In Jefferson County (KY), New Hampshire (NH), Riverside (CA), Rochester (NY), Wilmington (DE)

**Mikva Challenge** – with support from with the **Bezos Family Foundation** – are excited to announce the **Action Civics Model Site Initiative (ACMSI)**.

The new initiative focuses on youth civic engagement and learning, and provides support to five sites nationwide that are seeking to **develop strong and sustainable student voice** and **youth civic engagement** in their school districts and regions. Through this initiative Mikva Challenge will partner with the selected sites in Kentucky, New Hampshire, California, New York and Delaware, for three years and will provide:

1) Action Civics curricula, 2) sustained and ingrained professional learning, 3) community engagement resources, and 4) youth voice and civic action showcase coordination.

The goal of this new initiative is to help communities develop their most important civic resource – young people – and create dynamic strategies and sustainable ecosystems that **support youth voice and civic action**.

*“What’s exciting about this initiative is the chance for thousands of young people to discover their civic identities and practice the art of citizenship in the real world,”* says Brian Brady, Mikva Challenge President. *“This type of civic learning – Action Civics – helps young people learn about democracy and also enhances their civic identities and personal development.”*

**Outcomes:** Alumni of the Mikva Challenge programs are more likely: **to vote (3x), graduate college, volunteer and participate in civic life**, than their peers.

The Partner Sites are excited about this opportunity. Martha Madsen, Executive Director at the New Hampshire Institute for Civic Education said, *“NH Civics is thrilled to be able to take such a successful national model and apply it, adapting the Mikva Challenge to our New Hampshire style. Youth in rural communities have experiences, opinions, and solutions that matter to our civil society. We want to hear their voices, and to work with them to build civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Youth in Groveton, Gorham, Littleton, Weare, Henniker, and Pittsfield have great potential to become effective citizens, taking informed action to serve the common good. We are grateful to Mikva Challenge, the Bezos Family Foundation, and our local NH supporters for making this possible.”*

**Mikva Challenge** develops youth to be empowered, informed, and active citizens who will promote a just and equitable society. We know that democracy is people taking action — speaking, engaging, learning, listening. Mikva clears a path for young people to be involved now, and to develop confidence and habits that will serve them — and the world we share — all their lives.

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is a verb.®**