

### **SUMMARY**

As we approach the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our nation's founding, we are faced with a crisis: American civil society is breaking down. The Founding Fathers understood that the American experiment could only survive if its citizens were both informed and educated. Today, Americans with differing views increasingly fail to see one another as part of the same national community. Young Americans are turning away from core American values. Many lack even a basic understanding of how our government works or what their responsibilities are as citizens. This crisis stems from our failure to properly steward our civic inheritance, and it shows most clearly in our young people—who know little about their country and too much about division and politicized activism.

### **K-12**

- ★ Civic education must begin in K-12 classrooms. Young people should not be indoctrinated into any ideology but infused with a new understanding of and passion for what they share: the history, principles, and values that define our nation.
- ★ Critical Race Theory is the “anti-civics,” and young Americans are being indoctrinated with a hatred for our country, instead of viewing the American experiment as a noble endeavor.
- ★ Quality civics education helps sustain a republic by cultivating civic virtue and a shared sense of collective identity in its citizens.
- ★ College admission exams influence what is taught in secondary schools, as high schools find themselves “teaching to the test.”

#### **Statistics:**

- ★ 8<sup>th</sup> grade civics assessment NAEP scores have dropped for the first time in nearly 30 years:
  - Only **23%** of 8<sup>th</sup> graders scored at or above “proficient.”
  - **~33%** of 8<sup>th</sup> graders scored below “basic,” which indicates that they are unlikely to be able to describe the structure and function of the U.S. government or core American principles.
  - Only **49%** of test takers report taking a course on civics or U.S. government.
  - **29%** of test takers reported having a teacher whose primary responsibility included teaching civics or U.S. government
  - **27%** of students in the lowest quartile were able to explain why it is important for Americans to participate in the political process, compared to **66%** in the highest quartile.

### **HIGHER EDUCATION & YOUNG AMERICANS**

- ★ According to a recent analysis, only 14 of the 50 flagship universities require civics education as a college graduation requirement.
- ★ Socialism is treated as fashionable and enlightened on campuses, but it demands that individuals yield their autonomy and dignity to the State—an expectation that runs counter to the core values and founding principles of the United States.
- ★ On college campuses, disfavored speech is now considered a form of violence, turning honest disagreement into something suspect and even dangerous.
- ★ We have seen growing support for political violence—what Rutgers University calls “[assassination culture](#)”—among “younger, highly online, and ideologically left-aligned” individuals (see statistics below).

## Statistics:

- ★ Real-world examples of "[assassination culture](#)" in recent history:
  - **Jay Jones**, Attorney General of Virginia, who wrote a series of text messages to a colleague in which he wished death upon his political rival.
  - **Charlie Kirk**, conservative media figure and free speech activist, was assassinated in 2025.
  - **President Donald Trump** survived two assassination attempts in 2024.
  - **Brian Thompson**, United Healthcare CEO, was assassinated in 2024. His alleged killer, **Luigi Mangione**, has garnered wide public support.
- ★ Additional polling on the favorability of assassination culture:
  - **31%** of all people surveyed, **14.3%** of right-of-center, and **50%** of left-of-center respondents supported the idea of murdering **Elon Musk**.
  - **38%** of all people surveyed, **20.3%** of right-of-center, and **56%** of left-of-center respondents supported the idea of murdering **President Trump**.
- ★ [18–24-year-olds](#) are disconnected from the American political process:
  - **67%** were registered to vote prior to the 2024 election, and only **48%** of registered voters planned to vote, which is **27%** of all surveyed.
  - **50%** felt their vote matters.
  - **40%** were able to answer one out of four civics questions correctly.
  - **35%** felt satisfied with the government, **27%** still felt "optimistic" with democracy, and only **61%** expressed pride in being American.
- ★ There is a [disparity](#) between what adults know, and what they think they know:
  - **74%** of adults surveyed felt confident they could explain how our government works, but **58%** of those same respondents failed to pass a basic civics test.
  - **84%** of Americans recognize the political division in our country, with **27%** saying it has caused strain on their personal relationships.