

## 26: Student Advocacy Kit Community Problem Solving Framework

### Objectives

- 1) Students will be able to determine a course of action when the issue they wish to address in their community involves the cooperation and assistance of others.
- 2) Students will be able to express and defend their points-of-view and think critically to analyze and self-evaluate their course of action.

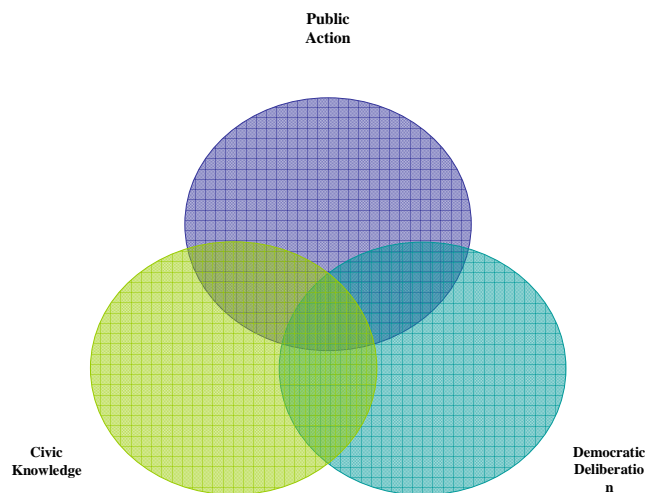
### Materials

- ✓ copies of *26 Student Advocacy Kit* for each student or group of students
- ✓ Problem-Solving with **26** handout for each student or group of students
- ✓ Problem-Solving Framework Scenarios handout for each student or group of students

### Background

PennCORD defines civic learning as the integration of three spheres: **civic knowledge**, **public action**, and **democratic deliberation**.

- ✓ **Civic knowledge:** an understanding of United States government and history. It focuses on the rights and responsibilities guaranteed to each citizen in the Constitution.
- ✓ **Public action:** the actions taken by each citizen in one's home, school, neighborhood, city, state, nation &/or global community.
- ✓ **Democratic deliberation:** the ability to consider, analyze and discuss issues with others.



## Procedure

- 1) **Warm Up** - Students will answer the following questions:
  - a. How do you solve a personal problem?
  - b. How do you solve a community-wide problem?
  - c. What are the differences in solving these two types of problems?  
(Possible answers include: number of stakeholders involved or scope of the problem)
- 2) **Direct Instruction** – As a whole group, the class will read one of The Ethicist’s columns and answer the questions below them. Teacher will guide students through the Problem-Solving Community Framework on pages 15-17 of **26** to address the problem presented to The Ethicist.
- 3) **Guided Practice** - Teacher will lead a discussion of the ethical dilemmas and record students’ answers.
  - a. What policies, rules and laws should both the student and teacher be aware of when solving their dilemmas?
  - b. What must be considered, analyzed and discussed to solve each dilemma?
  - c. What actions should be taken to solve each dilemma?
- 4) **Independent Practice** - Use the scenarios given or authentic situations generated by your students to allow students independent practice with the problem-solving framework.

## Problem Solving with 26

- 1) Read the following questions sent to the New York Times columnist, The Ethicist.
- 2) Determine the approach you would take to address these ethical dilemmas and answer the questions.

### **Bad Grad, Good Grad**

One of my students copied a term paper from the Internet, cutting and pasting from various un-credited sources. The rules say expulsion or an 'F' in the course is appropriate, but I proposed that she search out the several dozen articles she used to "compose" her paper and write each author an apology. I will mail the letters. My department chair thinks this is unethical — a cruel and unusual punishment. You?

- P.R. to The Ethicist (November 18, 2007)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/18/magazine/18wwln-ethicist-t.html>

1. How would you solve this ethical dilemma? Is your solution fair or equitable?
2. Why is your solution the best possible way to deal with this situation?
3. What other possible solutions are there to deal with this situation?
4. Who are the stakeholders in this scenario?

### **School Openness**

A foundation hired me to start and help run a philanthropy club at the high school where I am a junior. We raise money for women's health in Mexico. None of the other members are paid. Am I ethically wrong not to tell them (or colleges or future employers) that I am paid for work they might assume is voluntary?

- Anna to The Ethicist (May 13, 2007)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/13/magazine/13wwln-ethicist-t.html>

1. Who are the stakeholders in this scenario?
2. List ways in which this problem can be solved.
3. How would you solve this dilemma?

### **Follow the Rules or the Message?**

I am the president of the antidrug group at my high school. All members pledged not to use drugs or they would be kicked out, but I know that some of the most passionate and respected members have done so and laughed off their commitment to the group. Is it ethical to “tattle” on these people and basically destroy the existence of the group, or should we continue to preach a message that even some of us don’t believe in?

- Anonymous to The Ethicist (June 8, 2008)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/08/magazine/08wwln-ethicist-t.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/08/magazine/08wwln-ethicist-t.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

1. Who are the stakeholders in this scenario?
2. List 3 ways to solve this problem & the obstacles associated with each solution.
3. What is the best possible solution considering the obstacles the solution presents?
4. How should the student proceed in implementing the best possible solution?

### **Used Goods**

I am a public-school teacher. Years ago a school official had us place all old computers in the hall for trash collection, to make way for new models. Hating this waste, I gathered many old computers into my classroom and continued to use them. Now I am about to retire and must clean out my classroom. Rather than leave the old machines to be trashed, may I sell them and donate the proceeds to charity?

- Mary to The Ethicist (September 9, 2007)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/09/magazine/09wwln-ethicist-t.html>

1. Who are the stakeholders in this scenario?
2. List 3 ways to solve this problem & the obstacles associated with each solution.
3. What is the best possible solution considering the obstacles the solution presents?
4. How should the teacher proceed in implementing the best possible solution?

## Problem Solving Framework Scenarios

### **I. Scenario**

The students at your school have noticed that only the most popular students are voted onto the student government.

#### Directions

Use the problem solving framework on pages 15-17 of **26** to brainstorm solutions and create an action plan to ensure that student government candidates are measured by criteria other than popularity.

### **II. Scenario**

Your school's student government is having trouble getting people to attend meetings and to participate.

#### Directions

Use the problem solving framework on pages 15-17 of **26** to brainstorm solutions and create an action plan to interest more students in school governance.

### **III. Scenario**

The food in your cafeteria is really expensive, unhealthy, and tastes gross. Lots of students in your school want a change.

#### Directions

Use the problem solving framework on pages 15-17 of **26** to brainstorm solutions and create an action plan that can help solve this problem.