**Four Freedoms Democratic Club Education Working Group**

**Resolution Supporting Civic Engagement & Preparation in Public Schools**

WHEREAS there has been an increase in troubling developments in our national politics, including increased public reliance on inaccurate opinion based news sources especially over the last several years, that has led to a growing polarized electorate, lack of focus on substantive policy, and widespread acceptance of one-sided, erroneous information;

WHEREAS for decades, there has been a low proportion of eligible voters who actually go to the polls particularly in local elections; the number of citizens who participate in local community activities has dramatically declined; and more Americans than ever are neglecting basic civic responsibilities, including jury service;

WHEREAS there has been a decreased focus on social studies curriculum in New York City public schools in recent years, particularly on the elementary school level;

WHEREAS these worrisome trends raise serious questions about how well public schools are carrying out one of their most critical responsibilities—to prepare a new generation that is capable of meaningful civic engagement, including voting with an understanding of the facts in order to safeguard our democracy—even though the U.S. Supreme Court and 32 state supreme courts have explicitly stated that preparation for capable citizenship is a primary purpose of education;

WHEREAS the New York State constitution guarantees every student in the state the right to a sound and basic education which has been interpreted as including preparation for civic participation;

WHEREAS far too many public schools in New York City fail to provide curriculum in civics education, social studies or other types of education necessary to fulfill this critical guarantee of education sufficient to prepare students for capable citizenship;

THEREFORE, the Four Freedoms Democratic Club resolves to support certain key organizations, policies and legislation on the City, State, and national level which aim to equip New York City public school students with the necessary knowledge, skills, experiences, and values, for them to recognize their civic roles and exercise their civic powers to work for meaningful social change and strengthen our democracy.

These efforts include working with DemocracyReady NY, a statewide, nonpartisan, intergenerational coalition of organizations and individuals committed to preparing all students for civic participation. <http://www.democracyreadyny.org/#mission-goals>

Sources: DemocracyReady NY <http://www.democracyreadyny.org/#mission-goals>

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