**Design Clinic Notes**

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Name: Kendall Hodson

Affiliation(s): King County Elections

Email: kendall.levanhodson@kingcounty.gov

**Context:** Kendall is seeking advice/guidance on ways to engage the youth with voting

**Could you help me…**

Get the youth more engaged with voting. Especially 18-24 year olds. We have connected with high schools and community colleges but not a lot of traction so far.

**Notes**

**Share more about...**

* The barriers that exist- where they are geographically. For local elections, maybe not as invested in community.
* What you have done with community colleges to get more votes? Tours, ballot drop boxes on some campuses and voting centers. Send out letters and pamphlets to HS but not effective
* What other sorts of outreach? Voter education fund, grants to community based organizations to do voter education and engagement. Could be a forum or festival with food.
* Your social media strategy- we have a social media person, not a huge following. Some digital advertising and paid advertising.
* Your focus… is it to get students to register to vote or follow through to actually vote? More follow through, taking steps to fill out ballot every year. Voting behavior starts early.
* Market research and focus groups- we haven’t done a lot of this.
* What you are doing with middle and elementary- almost nothing. In the past we have done a successful tour but not much proactive right now going on with that
* Intersection of youth with other identities/ traditionally oppressed communities- our organizations take this on
* What responsibility of your office- we are not educators, but we have obligation to fulfill this important part of civic engagement

**This makes me think of...**

* We had voter days in elementary school and it was fun, it started early.
* The time is a barrier for voting and I don’t know who my state officials are or I don’t feel impacted by them. Dealing with that potential misperception
* We vote when it impacts us- taxes and levies etc.
* Other youth focused groups who have been struggling with engagement
* Struggle in general to get students to turn work in at college
* Things need to be weaved into their lives at an early age. For orchestra, we need to get them in early and finding ways to support that at an early age before it’s too late
* Last year at BC Sapan and others spent hours trying to get students registered. Some didn’t know anything about the elections or felt they weren’t smart enough to vote. Some of feedback as why they don’t vote was surprising
* At college, voting was emphasized and a big deal. We would march together and part of the shared identity there. It was something that was valued
* The cognitive load required to vote and how do I find resources to learn about candidates. Who can I talk to to learn more about it all?
* Importance of having parents engaged and informed

**You might try...**

* Instead of having people come to you, send people out to schools
* Reach out to middle school government teachers a year in advance. Put a social media place in a school where students can take a photo and learn more
* Could use some grant money to support faculty to develop a voting unit where they learn about issues on ballot
* Partnering with welcoming week to reach immigrant communities
* Reach out to school board
* Create a youth advisory council
* Make a community social thing where students walk to the ballot box or something similar
* Having a high profile person- an elected official- to talk about voting
* For social media- the message is important. We don’t always know what is at stake. Why does my voice matter?
* Micro influencers- give them soundbites to drop or messages to audience
* Research different clubs in CC or HS and bring leaders together and have them think through strategies

**What struck me...**

* Can we do more of this (CE Fellows)?
* Youth advisory committee- engaging with clubs
* Youth and really young kids and their formative experiences with voting
* Curriculum or unit idea is great and we are working a little bit on this
* Micro influencer is a great suggestion and especially potentially with younger audiences