OVERVIEW

This workshop is designed to familiarize DCs with the local political structures and processes, provide DCs with a deeper understanding for systems-level root causes and goals (and why they are important in GC), and give DCs the opportunity to practice gathering quality research on – and building an action plan for – sample student Focus Issues.

Workshop Objectives:

By the end of this workshop, DCs will have...
   » Gained a basic understanding of local political structures and processes (how a bill becomes a law, how local budgets are built) and how individuals can and do impact them
   » Analyzed past GC projects using the Advocacy Hourglass framework and 4 Model Goals, focusing on the *how* and *what* DCs actually had to do to make the action project successful
   » Reviewed sample high-quality Focus Issue research to develop specific goals, identify targets and guest speakers
   » Practiced identifying effective tactics and building a class-wide action plan

Length: 125 to 135 minutes

Agenda:

1. Do Now (10-20 min):
      o Option A: K/W/L Chart *(10 min)*
      o Option B: Decision-Maker Calls *(20 min)*
2. Civics 101: Executive & Legislative Branches (30 min)
3. Root Cause, Goal Setting & Targets (20 min + 30 min) -- BREAK IN BETWEEN
4. Tactics & Action Planning (30 min)
5. Debrief & Exit Ticket (5 min)

Facilitator Prep

   » **Practice** facilitating the workshop; adjust timing as needed
   » **Decide** which Do Now activity to utilize.
      o **Create** a blank K / W / L chart on a piece of chart paper (or the whiteboard) to record Do Now responses (if using Do Now Option A)
   » **Review and update the PPT** with site-specific local political structures and processes (see slides with yellow highlighting)
   » **Coach** Chapter Directors on how to support small groups during the Research and Action Planning sessions
   » **Adapt and print** Focus Issue Cards and research articles (enough for teams of two to each have a card)
   » **Find out** what the wi-fi situation is at your DC Training venue, so that you can readily give DCs instructions on how to log on (or an alternative if your site does not have any public wi-fi)

Do Now (10 – 20 minutes)

Option A: K/W/L (10 min)

1. DO NOW: K/W/L CHART: On **pg 24** of your DC Handbook, find the three-columned chart. In the first and second columns, fill out what you **know** and what you **want to know** about local politics or advocacy. Leave the "L" column blank for now.

2. Give DCs 3-5 minutes for the Do Now. Then call on DCs to share their responses whole-group, and add them to the chart paper or whiteboard K/W/L chart in front of the room. (You will use their responses as a guide to demonstrate new learning throughout the workshop.)
   - Note for DCs that at the end of this workshop, they'll be filling out what they **learned** in the last column.

3. Review the workshop agenda.

Option B: Decision-Maker Calls (20 min)

4. Explain that DCs are now going to have an opportunity to do something that many of their students will be asked to do at some point in the GC program: **call a decision-maker** to share an opinion about an important community issue.

5. Invite DCs to spend a minute quietly thinking about a *local* (state or citywide) community issue they are bothered by, and jot it down on the bottom of **pg 24** of their Handbook.
   - Encourage DCs to think beyond their college campuses. You might give a few examples (airplane noise, traffic in a specific area, potholes) but try to let DCs brainstorm for a bit independently first.
   - Emphasize that DCs need not be experts on the topic, and it need not be a topic in the news – they just need to have observed it and be ready to complain about it.

6. Explain that our goal for this Do Now activity is to have DCs overcome any anxiety they may feel about connecting with people in power in local government. To do this, DCs will by making a <u>phone call</u> to a person in local or state government (elected or otherwise, in their hometown or current city), to express their feelings about the issue they came up with. It doesn't matter to us who they decide to call or what issue they chose.

7. Invite DCs to get into groups of 2-3. As a group, they can either identify one brave volunteer to call about his/her issue with the support of others – or allow each member to make a call if everyone feels up for it.
   - DCs should first do a quick search for a public official who could be a "decision-maker" on that issue, then look up his/her phone number and call.

     i. This could be an elected official representing their district, or a department head (ex: city's Director of Transportation if the group chooses long wait times for the bus).

8. Note for DCs that since it is (likely) a weekend day, DCs can expect leave a voicemail with their information. Encourage them to jot down a few notes before dialing, but to not spend too much time preparing!

9. Anticipate DCs' questions with answers listed on the next FAQ slide:

     i. "How do we pick who to call? *Do an online search for your elected city/state representative, or a list of city/state agencies that might relate to your issue. Take your best guess! The worst that can happen is you are referred to another office.*

     ii. What are we supposed to say to them? *Complain! Describe who you are (name, age, occupation), where you live, the problem you've observed, and what you'd like done about it (if you have a solution in mind).*

     iii. Do we have to leave our information? *If you really care about this problem, we'd recommend doing so.*

     iv. What if they call us back? *We call that success.*

10. Explain that DCs will have exactly **15 minutes** to do this activity, and then let them get into groups and begin.

11. After at least one member from each group has made a phone call, invite DCs to return to their seats. If time, ask for 2 volunteers to share out how that activity felt.

12. Review the workshop agenda and objectives.

Civics 101: Executive & Legislative Branches (30 min)

13. Show the quote: "All politics is local." Ask DCs to turn and talk to a partner or their table about what this quote means. After one minute, share a few answers whole group.
   - A politician's success is directly tied to his or her ability to influence the issues of his or her constituents
   - Decisions by local government often have a far greater impact on our daily lives than those of the federal government
   - Voters and constituents are usually driven to action (and to voting) by the smaller, mundane issues that affect their daily lives
     - i. Ex: Suggest building a casino in a municipality and voting spikes up a massive amount. Newport, RI had a 30% increase in voting in 2014 just for that issue

14. Explain that part of our purpose in GC is to teach young people about their potential to make tangible changes in their lives and communities using politics, chiefly the *most local and most accessible* structures. So we want to make sure DCs are fluent with them, as well.

15. Reiterate the "local" scale that your DCs and their classes will be working on (city and/or state), your suggestion that DCs not ignore the power of the bureaucracy, and expectation-setting that DCs and their students won't be solving these intractable societal problems – they just have to work to move the needle on them.

16. Explain that you're going to kick off this workshop with a quick round of Civics 101 Trivia – not to put anyone on the spot, but to jog their memory of high school government class.

17. Put the following trivia questions on the board (also on **pg 25** of their handbooks). Invite DCs to take 3-4 minutes to work alone or with a partner to talk through the questions, and to look up when they've answered them all.

18. Review the answers whole group, calling on different chapters for each response.
    - What are the three levels (scales) of government? *City/Local/Municipal, State, National/Federal*
    - What are the three branches of government? *Executive, Legislative, Judicial*
    - Which branch of government is in charge of creating laws? *Legislative*
    - Which branch of government is in charge of implementing laws by delivering services or programs? *Executive*
        i. In which branch is [School District]? *Executive*

19. Now invite DCs to test their knowledge on<mark>........[SAMPLE to continue below]</mark>

Root Cause, Goal Setting & Tactics (45 min)

Intro to Systemic Root Causes & Model Goals (20 min):
20. [Show the slide with the fishing "Economy" cartoon]. Invite DCs to look at the cartoon and respond.
    - What's going on in the picture?
    - What's preventing the fishermen from bringing home fish?
    - Why are the fish dead?
    - Who might have power over keeping the water clean/keeping the fish alive?

21. [Show the slide with the graphic of the individual surrounded by systems, which DCs can find on **page 30** of their DC Handbooks]. Explain that as soon students choose a focus issue, the next step is to consider *why* that issue is happening in the first place. We do that by asking, "Which system affects this issue?"

22. Highlight each of the systems, and ask volunteers to name 1-2 ways they interact with each system on a daily basis. (For example, Arts and Culture system: visiting a museum; Business and Commerce system: buying something at a local store...)

- Transportation
- Housing
- Parks and the Environment
- Business and Commerce
- Public Safety and Defense
- Arts and Culture
- Education
- Healthcare

23. Explain that "strong" root causes get at the systems-level reason that an issue is happening – *not* individual behaviors or attitudes.

24. Use the issue of "people smoking cigarettes" as an example.
    - If we look at individual root causes, we could say it's because people think smoking is cool, and then get addicted to smoking. '
    - If we dig deeper though, we can come up with possible systems-level root causes [invite DCs to guess the system, after you give them the answer in the first example]:
        i. Perhaps there are too many cigarette ads on buses and trains (Transportation System).
        ii. It could be that there's a lack of quality health education programs, highlighting the dangers of smoking (Education System).
        iii. Or, maybe there's a lack of regulation around how expensive or cheap cigarettes are (Business and Commerce System)….. [END of SAMPLE]