

WHY WE VOTE

YOUR YWCA RESOURCE GUIDE 2021

BOARD OF EDUCATION

CRT IN SCHOOLS

MUNICIPAL COURTS

CITY COUNCIL

VOTER SUPPRESSION



BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTIONS



WHY VOTING IN SCHOOL

BOARD ELECTIONS MATTERS

School board members are one of the largest groups of elected officials in Ohio. They have a significant impact on the day to day lives of surrounding communities – even for those who don't have children. In many ways, the quality of schools can determine the quality of your neighborhoods, quality of life and even COVID spread. The way schools manage their COVID responses is largely dependent on the school board. Lately, school board meetings have become sounding off boards in the mask mandate debate and have also been a focus point of the **Critical Race Theory** debate.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES

- Learn more about Ohio's School Board, upcoming elections and the candidates here: [Ballotpedia](#)
- Check out this nonpartisan guide on [how to choose a School Board Candidate](#)
- Learn more about [public education in Ohio](#)
- Study the Kirwan Institute report on [Race and Discipline in Ohio's Schools](#)
- Read about how schools in Ohio are grappling with the [coronavirus](#)
- Learn more about [why voting for school board members matters](#)
- Read about the [arguments for partisan school board elections](#) in Ohio
- Check out the [6 reasons to vote in school board elections](#)



TEACHING ABOUT RACE

CRITICAL RACE THEORY IN SCHOOLS

House Bill 322 is trying to ban the teach of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in schools. This legislation holds students back from engaging with perspectives outside of their own, thus barring them from cultivating critical thought-- something that is necessary to build a successful future. **This legislation centers the history of white Americans, and insistently ignores the history of people of color. The passage would largely silence the historical experiences and cripple the needs of communities of color.** According to the census, Columbus' population is rising in people of color, especially Black Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanic Americans. These communities deserve their histories reflected in their children's curricula, so our city can thrive as a multicultural area where all may succeed.

(Pamidigantam 2020)





STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES ON CRT

- [What is Critical Race Theory?](#)
- [What Is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack?](#)
- [Critical race theory bans are making teaching much harder](#)
- [Here's what Black students have to say about 'critical race theory' bans](#)
- [A Lesson on Critical Race Theory.](#)

VOTE ON YOUR MUNICIPAL COURT

WHAT DO MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGES DO?

Judges are the only public officials with authority to take a person's property, freedom, and in states like Ohio, even their lives.

At the Municipal level, judges tackle cases dealing with day to day issues like traffic citations, landlord and tenant disputes, evictions, and misdemeanor charges.



WHY DOES IT MATTER?



In recent years, municipal courts have become subjects of increased scrutiny. In the midst of our housing crisis for instance, municipal court judges across Ohio have refused to follow the federal moratorium on evictions and have continued to process eviction filings.

According to projections, proceeding in this manner will impact the Black community in Ohio hardest, heighten housing insecurity, and will lead to higher rates of COVID infection in Ohio communities.

As an apparatus of the criminal punishment system, Municipal Court judges also perpetuate inequity and fail our most vulnerable residents: people of color, people dealing with mental illness, people with low incomes and unhoused people. Experts have also leveled critiques of the court's reliance on bail and court fees for their funding - a practice that forces reliance on guilty pleas and exploits and harms those with low incomes.

CITY COUNCIL

Though City Council elections are defined by low voter turnout, councils serve vital functions in their communities. Their responsibilities range widely, from approving the city's budget, to establishing tax rates and responding to constituent concerns.

City Councils can actually have a more significant impact on the day to day lives of individuals than presidential and federal elections! For example, council members can address grievances related to pothole ridden roads, police budgets, COVID protocols and even racial justice! For example, in 2020, the Columbus City Council declared racism a public health crisis, to address systemic racism in healthcare and other institutions.



RESOURCES:

Read about Columbus City Council's demands for a federal investigation of the police!

Read about Columbus City Council's New Police Contract

Want to see city council in action? Watch meetings live here

Make your voice heard! Learn how to testify before the council.

Learn about the current state of Columbus city council elections, who's running and why critics allege undemocratic practices.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Judges have real, tangible and expansive impacts on our lives, communities and state as a whole. Their rulings can force people from their homes, incarcerate people, and wreak lasting damage.

Its important to elect judges who will be fair, impartial and beholden to the people.

We should seek to elect judges who at the very least, understand implicit bias and acknowledge that problems in our criminal system need to be rectified.



RESOURCES:

- [Check out the candidates](#)
- [Learn about their platforms! Find candidate's goals, experience and contact information here.](#)
- [The three questions every judicial candidate should answer](#)
- [Even more questions to ask candidates!](#)
- [Track campaign contributions](#)

WHAT ABOUT VOTER SUPPRESSION?

WHAT IS IT?

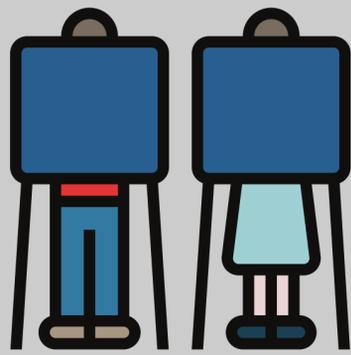
According to the League of Women Voters, Voter Suppression is any attempt to prevent or discourage certain Americans from registering to vote or casting their ballot.

WHY DOES IS MATTER?

The legacy of voter suppression in this country is as old as democracy itself. Groups in power have traditionally used voter suppression to guarantee their own victories or further their agendas. Historically, it has targeted Black, Indigenous and communities of color. Currently, Ohio lawmakers have introduced bills narrowing the list of acceptable IDs, banning ballot drop boxes, and severely limiting mail-in voting. All of which limit access to voting. Furthermore, 2021 marks a critical redistricting year that could shape congressional maps and impact policy and elections, for years to come.

(Pamidigantam 2020)





RESOURCES ON VOTER SUPPRESSION

- Learn more about the way voter suppression manifests on the ACLU's [website](#)
- Learn about the history and impact of voter suppression through the Brennan Center's [website](#).
- Join the Ohio Women Alliance's [fight](#) against HB 294
- Sign the [petition](#) advocating for common sense reforms to Ohio's voting system
- Send a [letter](#) to Ohio legislators asking for common-sense voting reforms
- Get informed on who represents you! Use this handy search [engine](#).
- Learn more about Redistricting [here](#).
- Join the [fight](#) for Fair Districts by writing Op-Eds, attending fair district events, informing your community and more!
- [Tell](#) President Biden to champion Federal Voting Rights Reforms!

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
columbus ohio



[VOTE411.ORG](https://www.vote411.org)

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)