

## Facilitation Plan

### Truth and Democracy: Education

#### I. CONTEXT SETTING: Introducing the Discussion (2-3 mins.)

This conversation is focused on the essential relationship between truth and democracy and how this relationship is at risk. In a democratic, self-governing society, we need truthful information about reality to guide our decisions. But how are we supposed to get this truthful information — and what challenges do we face in this task? This conversation focuses on the democratic importance of education as one way to get truthful information about reality.

When we think of education, we often think first of children. We limit ourselves when talking only about K-12 education, and limit ourselves when thinking only of formal education that happens within a school. If education means learning, let's hope that it's not only for young people and that it doesn't solely happen in schools. Further, when we think about education, let's think both about **education within a democracy** – and also **education for democracy**.

When we frame it this way, what emerging or growing challenges do you see for the relationship of education, truth, and democracy? Let's explore these challenges together, and help each other to think of different ways that we, as a democratic society, might meet those challenges.

#### II. DISCUSSION AGREEMENTS:

It helps to have some group agreements about how we'll engage in this conversation. Our suggestions are:

- **Be generous:** Helping each other to explore and remaining open to the truth others express
- **Be bold:** Opening ourselves up to new and different perspectives
- **Be connected:** We're here to make connections with each other rather than to win an argument

#### III. ROUND ONE: ROUND ROBIN Introductions and Personal Connections to the Topic (5-10 mins.)

Take a minute or so to introduce yourself and share a question, concern, or challenge that comes to mind when you think of education within, or for, a democratic society?

#### **IV. ROUND TWO: OPEN DISCUSSION**

##### **Expanding our Sense of the Topic (40–60 mins.)**

- What are some major existing or emerging challenges facing the relationship between education and democracy?
- What roles can, or should, education play in a democratic society? Why do democracies need education – and what are the forces working against education? And how would we know if education is fulfilling its role(s) in a democracy?
- When we think of the role of education within (or for) a democratic society, who shares what responsibilities for making it work? Who could, or should, have a say helping education to play whatever role it should in a democracy?
- What values should guide our decisions about education within – and for – democracy?
- What questions, concerns, or challenges are there about the ways that education is practiced and funded in a healthy democratic society?

#### **V. ROUND THREE:**

##### **Looking Ahead and Wrapping Up (10 mins.)**

- What are some different ways that a democratic society might address the challenges that emerged in our conversation?
- What are different possibilities for improving the connections of education, truthful information, and democracy?
- As we wrap up, what are some of the key insights or questions that you will take away from this conversation?