Student Checklist: Access and Equity in California Parks

Challenging Question: How can we expand park access for all Californians?

Add due dates to the following tasks and phases as instructed by your teacher.

Phase 1: Invitation to Engage, Explore Challenging Question, & Organize

Ask significant questions and define problems as you launch your project.

* Read “Invitation to Engage: Access and Equity in California Parks.” Review rubrics.
* After you are assigned to a group, you will adopt a role as a principal investigator, scientist, engineer, or policy analyst and develop a brief job description for the role. These roles may be adopted for the length of the project, or rotated within your group. Accept or modify the challenging question with your group and teacher.
* With your group, create an initial need-to-know list of relevant questions to launch your investigations into park access.

Phase 2: Explore Questions, Existing Models, and Knowledge

During the second phase of the project you will work in your group to question the status quo; specifically to explore, analyze, and interpret qualitative and quantitative data related to your need-to-know questions as you design a solution related to expanding access to parks or to a particular park.

* Read “Asking the Right Questions.” Working in your groups, use the Question Formulation Technique to refine, prioritize, and if necessary narrow down your need-to-know list of relevant questions developed in Phase 1. Assign specific questions to group members (by role, skills, or individual preference). Use these questions to launch your investigations. If your plan includes interviews, be sure to contact the subjects well in advance to set up appointments.
* Research and review existing access solutions and arguments for and against these solutions. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the arguments. Evaluate the quality and credibility of your sources with support from your teacher.
* Attempt to synthesize existing ideas, science concepts, and solutions into a “better solution.” What arguments and actions do you support? This is your draft project solution.
* With your group, meet with your teacher to review and gain approval for the plan for your project.
* Individually, perform a self-assessment of Phase 1 and 2 and write a brief plan of improvement to turn in to your teacher.

Phase 3: Explain and Evaluate Claims, Argue from Evidence, and Reason

In this phase, you will evaluate and develop new arguments for your park access solution, and complete planning for your presentation.

* Review the “Claims, Evidence, and Reasoning Guide.”
* Use the Claims, Evidence, and Reasoning chart, found in the reading, to refine the arguments for your solution. Select your best arguments for your park access solutions. Share them as directed by your teacher, and revise based on feedback.
* Read “Communicating Science and Policy to Public Audiences.”
* Complete planning for your park access solution final project. If it will be an in-person presentation (rather than an article or other medium), practice and review it with the Presentation Rubric.
* Individually, perform a self-assessment and write a plan of improvement to turn in to your teacher. Confirm arrangements for any off-site presentations,   
  if applicable.

Phase 4: Extend into Action: Communicate your Science, Engineering and Policy Solutions

Your primary academic role towards the end of the project is to communicate your thinking using visual tools, models, media presentations, or written products.

* If your final project is a presentation, perform technology checks on any equipment that will be needed and follow up with invited guests to confirm attendance at least 24 hours in advance. Present your proposed solutions to your audience. If your project is another format, publish, post, distribute, and publicize the final product.
* Perform self-assessment and peer reviews.
* Submit individual project notebook to teacher for review.

Phase 5: Reflecting, Evaluating, and Celebrating

Ask yourself how you could improve while your successes and failures are still fresh in your mind.

* Organize a group debrief with teacher. Have any new questions emerged?
* Write thank you notes to any adult mentors and partners.
* Perform a final self-evaluation, write a plan of improvement, and submit to teacher.
* Celebrate with your hard working team!