



## Massachusetts Citizens Congress on Poverty

*“We must realize that our future lies chiefly in our own hands.” Paul Robeson*

### *WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO*

1. Encourage school parents to vote
  - Parent associations can send a letter home to parents through the students about the importance of voting. You could provide information about where to register and vote and whether you can vote with a criminal record. Highlight the importance of voting with improving schools.
  - Organize a special parent association meeting on voting and invite local members of the legislature, city hall to speak on the issue and do answer questions.
  - Form a coalition of parents' associations from neighborhood schools and host a get out the vote rally to turn out folks on election day.
  - Organize a phone-a-thon to ask parents to call elected officials about the importance of funding education.
  
2. Educate the students on the importance of voting
  - Give a homework assignment to students to write about Black people and the vote.
  - Have students write a letter to their parents asking them to vote.
  - Organize a student essay contest on the importance of voting. Ask local sports teams and radio stations to sponsor and provide awards.
  - Organize a poster contest on the importance of voting. Give a prize to the winners.
  - Organize school debate on voting.
  - Organize a speech contest on the importance of voting.
  - Organize a student activity day at your local municipal building or statehouse and let the students see what elected officials do. Ask your local election officials to be tour hosts and make sure local community press covers the day.
  - Host a student lunch with local elected officials.
  - Encourage the student newspaper to print an election day special.
  - Devote an edition of the student/alumni newsletter on the importance of voting.
  - Have student newspaper reporters interview local reps and senators on the issue
  - Host a Heritage Day event for students.
  - Host a mock election in the school -- let every grade participate.

**Use, print, pass on any information on the UMN site you find useful.**

**Even if you choose one action, you will be helping to build a movement for equity.**