Policies in Motion

How citizens track proposals and follow through at three levels of government

8.C.7 "Explain how citizens can monitor and influence the development and implementation of public policies at local, state, and federal levels of government."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each paragraph, underline one way citizens can monitor a policy, circle one way they can influence it, and write 1 beside an action taken before approval and 2 beside an action taken after approval.

From Proposal to Practice

1. At the corner outside a middle school, students wait through two traffic lights to cross. A city council may consider a policy adding a longer walk signal and clearer crosswalk paint. Before a vote, residents can read the council agenda and proposed policy on the city website. They can speak at a public meeting or send the council a message describing when students cross. After approval, residents can check city transportation updates and visit the corner to see whether the signal timing and paint actually change. They can report delays to city staff.

2. A nearby road belongs to the state, so the city cannot set its work schedule. Suppose the state transportation department proposes a policy for safer crossings on state roads near schools. Residents can track the proposal through the department's website and public meeting notices. They can submit comments asking how crossing times will be measured before the policy is adopted. Once it takes effect, they can compare published project updates with conditions at the road. If promised changes are missing, they can contact the department and ask a state legislator to investigate.

3. At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Agriculture sets rules for meals served through federal school meal programs. Imagine it proposes a new rule about added sugar. Residents can read the proposal in the Federal Register and submit comments explaining how the rule could affect students. After the rule is final, state agencies review how schools follow meal program requirements. Residents can examine published menus and ask the state agency how it checks compliance. If they find a possible problem, they can share specific evidence with the agency and request a response.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Before the city council votes on the crossing policy, what could a resident read to monitor the proposal, and how could the resident influence the vote?

2. After the city approves the crossing policy, how could residents check whether it is being carried out and respond to a delay?

3. Why should a resident bring the state-road concern to the state transportation department rather than ask the city to set the work schedule? Give one way to monitor and one way to influence the policy after it takes effect.

4. How could a resident influence the proposed federal meal rule, then monitor and influence how it is followed after the rule is final?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A city's library board is considering a policy to keep its public library open on Sundays. In 4 to 5 sentences, explain how you would monitor and influence the policy before a vote and after it begins, naming what you would check and whom you would contact.

ANSWER KEY

Policies in Motion

GRADE 8 · 8.C.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline one way citizens can monitor a policy, circle one way they can influence it, and write 1 beside an action taken before approval and 2 beside an action taken after approval. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Before the city council votes on the crossing policy, what could a resident read to monitor the proposal, and how could the resident influence the vote?	**A resident could read the council agenda and proposed policy, then speak at a public meeting or send the council a message about when students cross.**
2	After the city approves the crossing policy, how could residents check whether it is being carried out and respond to a delay?	**They could check transportation updates and visit the corner to see whether the signal timing and paint change, then report delays to city staff.**
3	Why should a resident bring the state-road concern to the state transportation department rather than ask the city to set the work schedule? Give one way to monitor and one way to influence the policy after it takes effect.	**The road belongs to the state, so the city cannot set its work schedule. A resident could compare state project updates with road conditions, then contact the department about missing changes or ask a state legislator to investigate.**
4	How could a resident influence the proposed federal meal rule, then monitor and influence how it is followed after the rule is final?	**The resident could submit a comment on the proposal in the Federal Register. Later, they could examine menus, ask the state agency about its compliance checks, and share evidence of a possible problem with that agency.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before the vote, I would check the library board's meeting agenda and read its proposal for Sunday hours. I would tell the board at a public meeting which Sunday hours families need and why. After the policy starts, I would compare the posted hours with the hours the library is actually open. If the library often closes early, I would record the dates and ask the board how it plans to fix the problem.

For the marking job, accept any accurately identified monitoring and influence actions, with 1 and 2 matching their timing. For Your Turn, accept other realistic ways to check and influence the library policy if the response addresses both stages and names appropriate contacts.