

Lesson Three: Should Highways be Financed and Funded by Public-Private Partnerships?

1. Value Conflict Warm-Up:

Begin the class by Passing out the handout titled, Value Conflict Warm-Up. This activity intentionally postpones mention of public-private partnerships. The intent is to stimulate awareness and interest in value conflicts involved in highway building decisions before introducing complexities. This can be a brief activity if you simply ask students to mark their answers and you record total group responses on the board. But it could become a much longer and dramatic activity if you take time to explore student disagreement on one or more statements or take time class time to discuss each of the eight statements.

2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Public-Private Partnerships:

Begin Part Two by passing out the handout titled, Public-Private Partnership Worksheet Draft. After going over the definition of public-private partnerships at the top of the Worksheet, briefly explain that there is increasing interest in public-private partnerships because there are tremendous needs for infrastructure spending but lack of government resources and will to meet those needs. [See Teacher Notes for specific data]

The next step is to ask students to meet in pairs to brainstorm one or two potential advantages and disadvantages of public-private/partnerships and put their ideas on their worksheets. After discussing student ideas, pass out and go over a completed version of the Public Partnership Worksheet and tell students that this form will be an important asset for working on Part Three.

3. Highway Financing/Funding Options Case Study:

Pass out “**Highway Funding Options Case Study.**” Students in this part will decide on the merits of using either a traditional government approach or one of three different public-private partnership approaches for the building of a new, 25-mile highway section. The key to this activity is making certain that students understand what they are asked to do and there is a small group structure that will encourage participation. Groups could be as small as two or as large as five or seven. It will be helpful to either appoint a facilitator to start the process or have each group select a facilitator before the case study analysis begins. Emphasize again that the group should discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each option before beginning to decide its recommendation-using their Completed Public-Private Partnership Worksheet to help clarify issues. Five minutes before you want to begin small group reports, remind the facilitator to select someone to make a brief report. You may want to refer to **Teacher Notes #2: Different Forms of Public-Private Partnerships** to obtain more detailed information. A total class discussion approach can effectively substitute for the small group case study activity.