

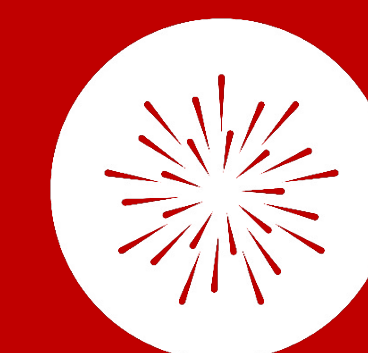
# Strengthening Cross-Partisan Collaboration in North Carolina Policymaking

Connecting students to the North Carolina Leadership Forum's (NCLF) goal of bringing together diverse local leaders to engage constructively on timely and controversial public policy topics



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Bass Connections Open



## BACKGROUND ON THE PROBLEM

- Polarization** and distrust in politics serve as barriers to enacting sound policy
  - Leaders contribute to **polarization** - they don't understand perspectives of opponents
  - North Carolina Leadership Forum (NCLF) addresses **polarization** at state & local level
  - State leaders have few spaces to engage in debate on important policy topics
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- College campuses may contribute to **polarization**; students have limited opportunities to engage with different political views
  - Students aren't exposed to the realities of state-level policymaking and the dynamics that make it difficult for local leaders to behave differently

## OBJECTIVES

This project seeks to enhance NCLF's understanding of the relevant polarization work in **academia** and **communicate** NCLF's work to a wider audience to increase its impact

Additionally, this project seeks to provide students with the following opportunities:

- Exposure to NCLF Model and State Leaders**  
Develop students' leadership skills in engaging with different points of view
- Application of Research to Public Policy Setting**  
Conduct research on polarization; provide research support & draft reports

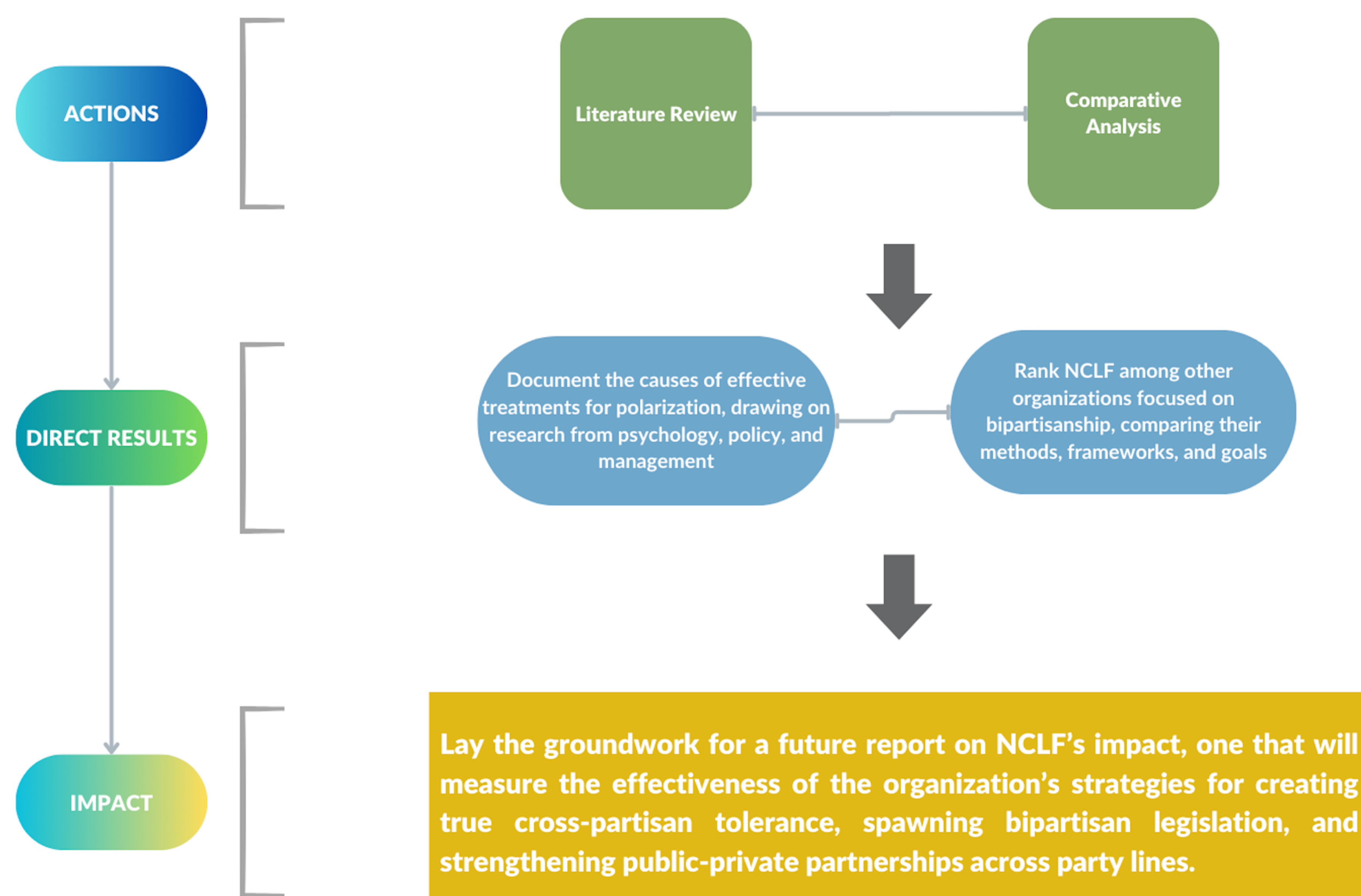
## APPROACH



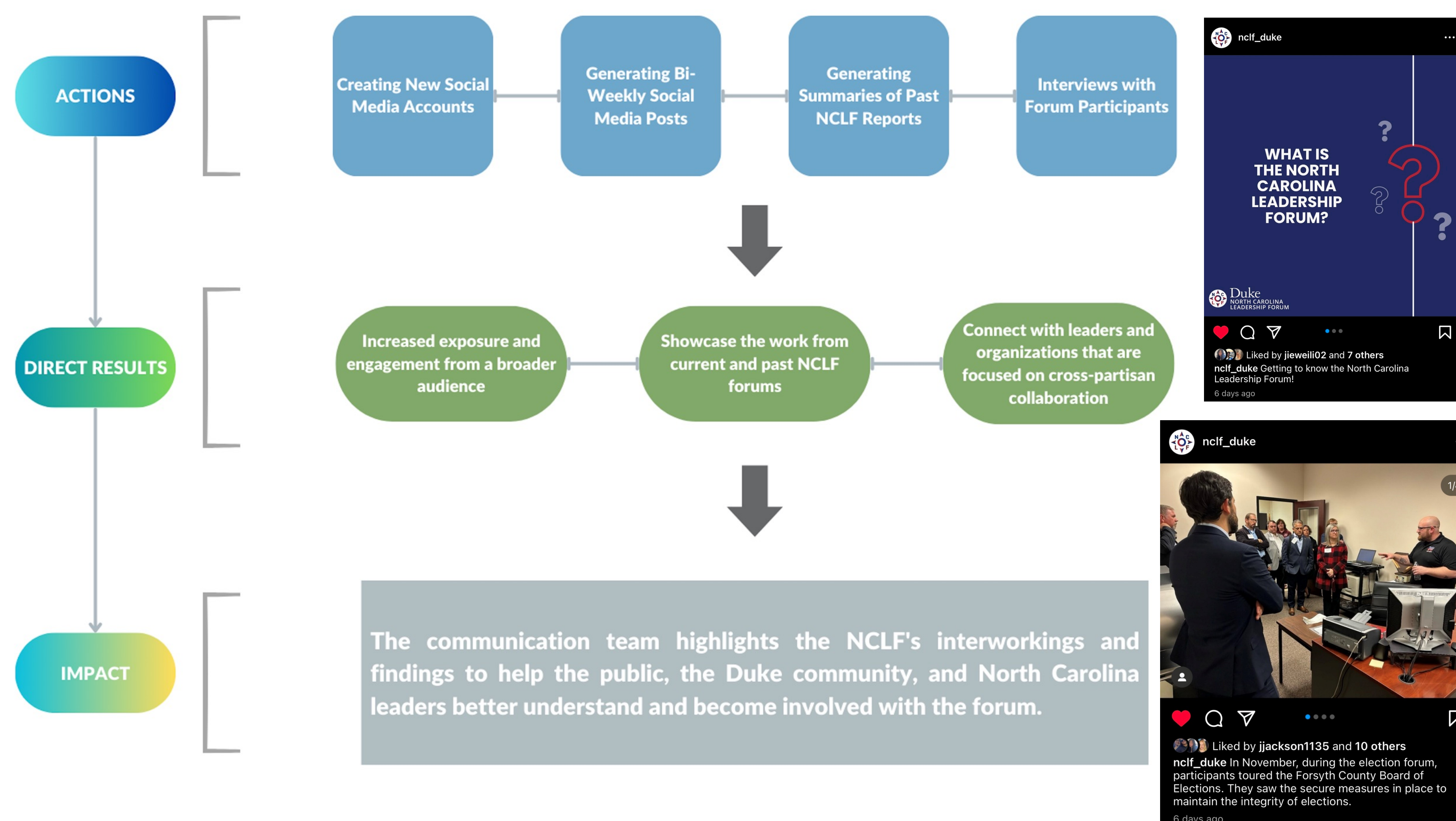
Throughout the year, students attended NCLF cohort meetings dedicated to **elections**.

Students were also split into two different sub-teams: **Academic Context** & **Communications**.

## ACADEMIC CONTEXT TEAM



## COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



## STUDENT IMPACT

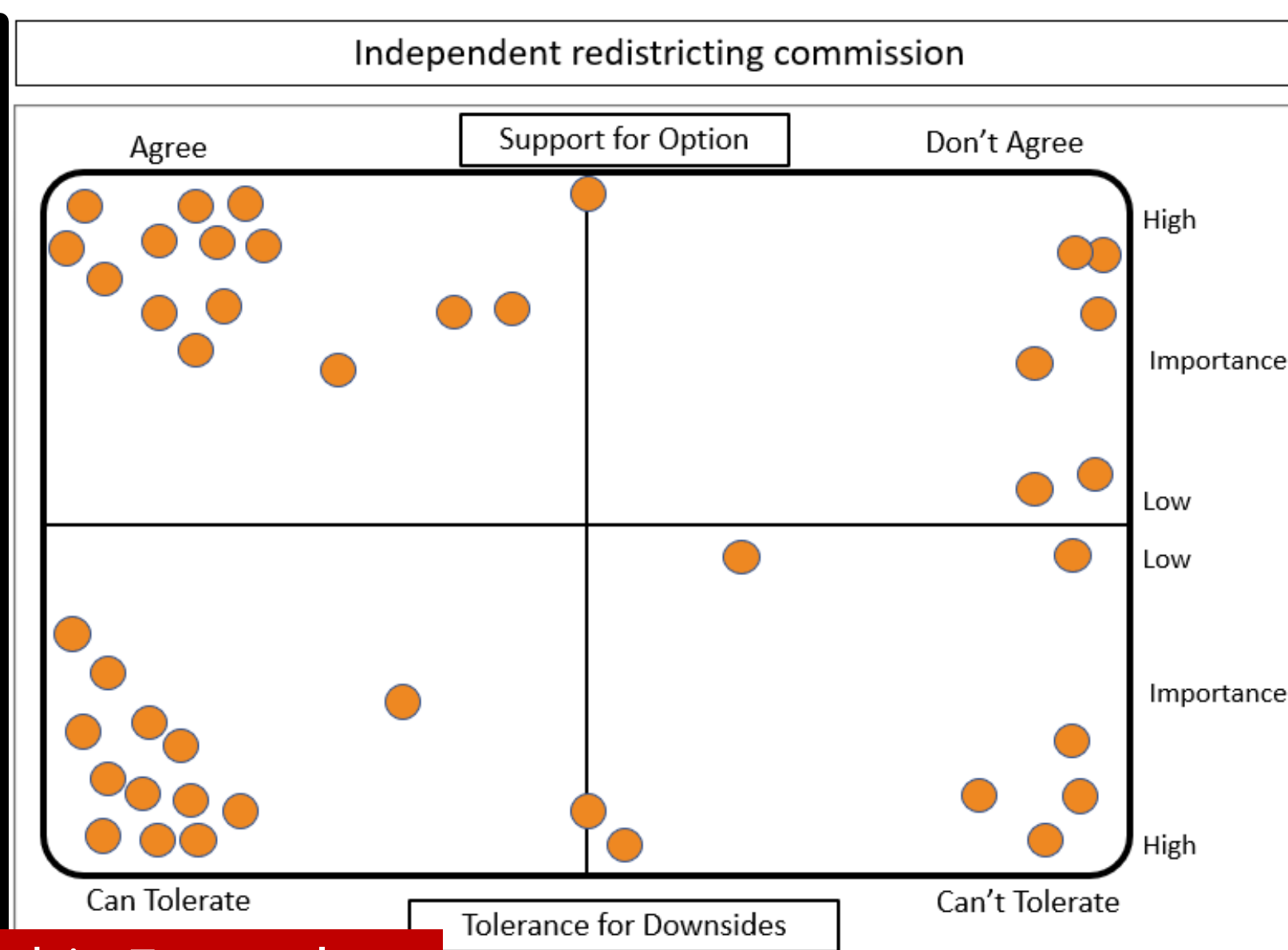
In addition to sub-team work, students **drafted the final report** for the elections cohort and created **visual summaries** of the concerns discussed, such as gerrymandering.

Gerrymandering prevents the results from being representative

Areas of Broad Agreement: Independent redistricting commission

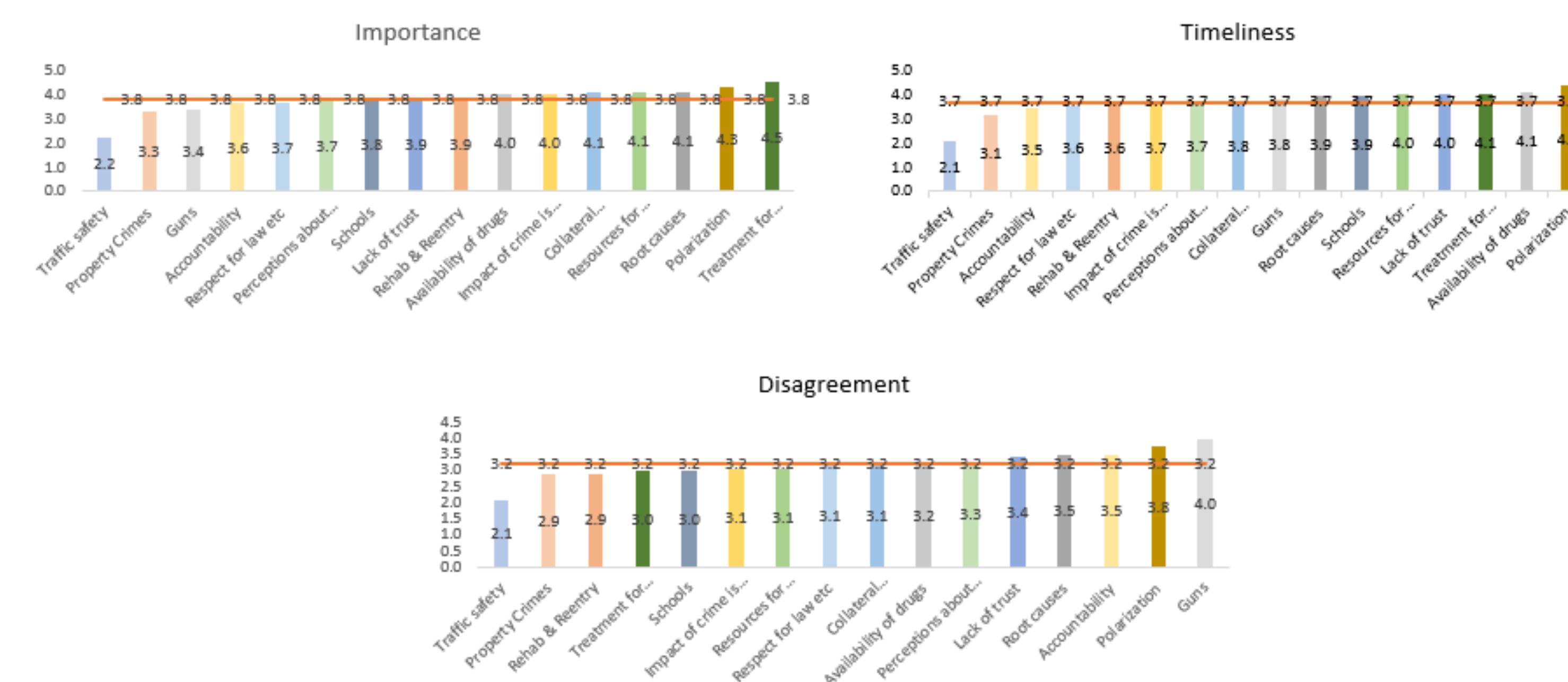
Areas of Varying Degrees of Support: Radically increase the number of seats in the legislature

Areas of Strong Disagreement: NC General Assembly prioritizes competitiveness as a redistricting principle.



Report Graphic Examples

Students also suggested a **new method for choosing concerns discussed in the Forum**, which was piloted in Spring 2024. A sample of their idea is shown on the right.



Pilot Example