



California Department of Education

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California Secretary of State

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August 29, 2018

Dear County and District Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, and High School Principals:

High School Voter Education Weeks (September 17–28, 2018)

As we approach the upcoming November 6 statewide general election, it is important to ensure that our students are learning to become active and engaged participants in our democracy. It is never too early to motivate our students to get involved. That's why we strongly encourage your school to observe High School Voter Education Weeks on September 17–28 to put our students on the path to a lifetime of civic engagement and voting. With online pre-registration available for sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds, it's now easier than ever to get students prepared to cast their own ballots. Once pre-registered, they will automatically become active voters on their eighteenth birthday.

California *Education Code* designates the last two weeks of September as High School Voter Education Weeks and authorizes schools to designate students as "voter outreach coordinators." With county elections officials as partners, we provide resources to make it easy for schools to participate. Teachers can help eligible students pre-register or register to vote either on a paper form or online. Voter outreach coordinators can lead registration drives and other school activities aimed at civic participation.

We encourage you to make High School Voter Education Weeks the start of your school's civic engagement activities this year. Here are some ideas and resources to get you started:

- Encourage eligible students to visit <https://registertovote.ca.gov/> to register or pre-register to vote. Set up voter registration terminals in the school library or at large school events.
- Register your school for the California Student Mock Election at <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/student-mock-election/> by September 19 to receive free voting materials. Student Mock Election Day is October 9!

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- Inform students how they can learn the electoral process firsthand—and get paid—by serving as poll workers on Election Day.
<http://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdfs/student-poll-worker-flyer.pdf>.
- Urge administrators, students, and parents to visit the new <http://HighSchool.sos.ca.gov> portal that includes important information about voter registration and pre-registration, Student Mock Election, Student Poll Worker, and High School Voter Education Weeks.
- Review the High School Voter Education Weeks page on the Secretary of State's website: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/help-strengthen-our-democracy/high-school-voter-education-weeks>.

By working together, we can educate and encourage our young citizens to register to vote and turn out at the polls to ensure their voices are heard in 2018 and beyond.

If you have any questions about High School Voter Education Weeks or other civic engagement opportunities, please feel free to contact Evelyn Mendez, National Voter Registration Act and Voter Outreach Program Manager, by phone at 916-695-1561 or by email at emendez@sos.ca.gov, or Jason Spencer, Principal Advisor to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, by phone at 916-319-0521 or by email at jaspencer@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
California Secretary of State



Tom Torlakson
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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