



California Department of Education

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April 3, 2019

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

High School Voter Education Weeks (April 15–26, 2019)

As we approach the 2020 Presidential Primary Election next March, 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 is why we strongly encourage your school to observe High School Voter Education Weeks on April 15–26, 2019, to put our students on the path to a lifetime of civic engagement and voting.

Although this year's High School Voter Education Weeks may overlap with some spring break schedules, we encourage you to participate any time in the month of April.

The California *Education Code* designates the last two weeks of April as High School Voter Education Weeks and authorizes schools to designate students as voter outreach coordinators.

As you know, pre-registration for sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds has been a huge success in California, with over 313,951 pre-registrations since the program launched in September 2016.

It is now easier than ever to get sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds civically engaged.

Once pre-registered, they will automatically become active voters on their eighteenth birthday.

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.

Here are some ideas and resources to get you started:

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- ✓ To learn more about pre-registration in California, please visit <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/high-school-programs/#prereg>.
- ✓ Encourage eligible students to visit <https://www.RegisterToVote.ca.gov> to register or pre-register to vote. Set up voter registration terminals in the school library or at large school events.
- ✓ Inform students how they can participate in the electoral process firsthand—and get paid—by serving as poll workers on Election Day. Please visit the CA Secretary of State web page at <https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdfs/student-poll-worker-flyer.pdf> for additional information.
- ✓ Urge administrators, students, and parents to visit the new <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/high-school-programs/> portal that includes important information about voter registration and pre-registration, the Student Mock Election, the student poll workers, and High School Voter Education Weeks.
- ✓ Review the High School Voter Education Weeks web page, which provides an opportunity for high schools and students to partner with county elections officials to promote civic education and participation on campus and foster an environment that cultivates lifelong voters and active citizens, located on the CA Secretary of State's website at <https://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 2020 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, Program Manager, National Voter Registration Act, Voter Education and Outreach, at 916-695-1561 or EMendez@sos.ca.gov, or Pete Callas, Education Administrator of the High School Innovations and Initiatives Office, at 916-319-0669 or pcallas@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
California Secretary of State



Tony Thurmond
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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