

STUDENT VOTER REGISTRATION

The Governing Board recognizes that community engagement and civic participation are important parts of a student's education. The Board also regards the right to vote as one of the most important rights of citizenship in a democratic country. The Board holds as a high priority the important role of all staff members in informing students of the importance of registering to vote and assisting students in this process.

The Governing Board acknowledges the California Secretary of State's encouragement for school districts to participate in voter registration activities.

It is the intent of the Legislature that every eligible high school and college student receive a meaningful opportunity to apply to register to vote. It is also the intent of the Legislature that every school does all in its power to ensure that students are provided the opportunity and means to apply to register to vote (California Elections Code 2146).

Legal Foundations

California state law allows 16- and 17-year olds to pre-register to vote with their voter registration coming into effect as soon as they turn 18.

Assembly Bill 1817 (Statutes of 2014) designates the last two full weeks in April and September as *High School Voter Education Weeks* and encourages school districts to conduct voter registration and education drives on campuses and in classrooms during these four weeks.

California Elections Code 2146 requires the Secretary of State to annually provide high schools with enough voter registration forms for all students who are of voting age or will be of voting age by the end of the year. As added by SB 854 (Ch. 481, Statutes of 2007), Elections Code 2148 requires every high school to designate a contact person and provide his/her address, telephone number, and email address to the Secretary of State to facilitate the distribution of voter registration materials.

Legal Reference:

Education Code 49040-49041 High School Voter Education Weeks and High School Voter Outreach Coordinators
California Elections Code
Section 2000(b), 2102(d), 2102(a), 2107, 2196 (West), 2009 Cal. Legis. Serv. Ch. 364
Section 2101-2102 High School Voter Outreach Coordinators
Section 2145-2148 Distribution of Voter Registration Forms
Senate Bill 854 (Statutes of 2007)
Assembly Bill 1817 (Statutes of 2014)

Web Sites:

California Secretary of State: <http://www.ss.ca.gov>
California Voter Foundation: <http://www.calvoter.org>
Cities, Counties, and Schools Partnership: <http://www.ccspartnership.org>
CDE Student Voter Engagement: <http://cde.go/pd/ca/hs/stvote.asp>
State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Civic Education Initiative Web page
California Voter Bill of Rights: <http://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/voter-bill-of-rights/voter-bill-of-rights.pdf>

Documents:

Empowering the Voters of Tomorrow—Developing a Winning High School Voter Registration Process: A Training Guide, Third Edition, League of Women Voter Education Fund, 2015

California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning Report, *Revitalizing K-12 Civic Learning in California: A Blueprint for Action*

ADOPTED: 9/7/2016

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The following procedures are to be used in order to implement the intent of Board Policy 5148:

- A. To encourage students to participate in the elections process when they are eligible, the Superintendent or designee shall determine the most effective means of distributing voter registration forms provided by the Secretary of State.
- B. Under the direction of the Superintendent or designee, each high school will designate a staff contact person and provide his/her address, telephone number, and email address to the Secretary of State to facilitate the distribution of voter registration materials.
- C. Annually, during the *High School Voter Registration Weeks* (the last two full weeks of September and April), each high school will provide adequate time within its social science courses for teachers to assist age-appropriate students in the process of voter registration, which may be accomplished either on a paper form or online.
- D. Teachers shall provide a context for the voter registration activity as well as the opportunity for age-appropriate students to register to vote. The Board believes that students who are given information on why voting is important and how to register are much more likely to register to vote than those who are simply handed a form.
- E. Teachers will encourage students to use the classroom opportunity to register to vote but will not advise, counsel, or suggest to students in any way how to vote on any particular ballot issue.
- F. Students' participation in the voter registration will be entirely voluntary on their part. No part of the students' course grades will be dependent upon their participation or lack of participation in the voter registration process.
- G. Instructors will announce during the days prior to the in-class voter registration process that students should come to class prepared with the last four digits of their social security number or with a California ID or driver's license, at least one of which they will need to complete the voter registration form, if they intend to participate in the voter registration process.
- H. Students will not be required to provide postage, mail or turn in voter registration forms on their own. Students will be given the opportunity to turn in completed voter registration forms to their instructors. At the end of *Voter Education Weeks*, all forms will be collected by each school and returned to the County Registrar by a procedure determined by the Superintendent or designee and in compliance with California law and the Elections Code.
- I. School principals, or their designees, may appoint one or more pupils who are enrolled at that high school to be a voter outreach coordinator. A voter outreach coordinator may coordinate voter registration activities on his or her high school campus that encourage age-appropriate students to vote. A voter outreach coordinator may, with the approval of the administrator of the high school or his or her designee, coordinate election-related activities on his or her high school campus, including voter registration drives or other election-related pupil outreach activities.

- J. Principals or their designees will report to the Superintendent or designee the number of students who register to vote on campus and will provide input regarding best practices and any areas of concern or improvement which might be incorporated into the Administrative Regulations for this policy in the future.
- K. Student leadership/ASB groups will be encouraged to participate in an active manner in the student voter registration process on campus.
- L. School principals shall follow up with their staffs to remind Grade 12 students during senior class assemblies and graduation preparation of the importance to vote and the means to register to vote.
- M. The Superintendent or designee shall place a link to the Secretary of State's online voter registration application on the district website and each school's website (<http://registertovote.ca.gov>).

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