



California Department of Education

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July 15, 2026

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

High School Voter Education Weeks (September 14–25, 2026)

As educators, you play an important role in preparing students to become informed and engaged participants in our democracy. Early exposure to civic education helps build lifelong habits of participation, and schools are critical to that effort. We invite districts and school sites to participate in these statewide civic engagement opportunities during the 2026–27 school year.

High School Voter Education Weeks will take place **Monday, September 14, through Friday, September 25, 2026**. This initiative is designed to raise civic awareness among high school students and encourage eligible students ages 16 and 17 to preregister to vote so their registration becomes active when they turn 18. Since California launched its preregistration program in 2016, more than 1.5 million students have preregistered to vote, resulting in more than 1.2 million eligible voters.

Schools may further support civic engagement by hosting voter registration or preregistration drives. Eligible students may preregister online using the California Online Voter Registration system at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>. Students may also preregister during a driver license or state identification card transaction through the California Department of Motor Vehicles.

Student Mock Election

In addition to High School Voter Education Weeks, the California Secretary of State and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction are partnering to host the 2026 California Student Mock Election on **Tuesday, October 6, 2026**. This statewide program provides students with a hands-on opportunity to learn about the voting process and gain an understanding of how elections work. After ballots are counted, students can compare their results with peers across California. Registration for the 2026 California Student Mock Election is open until **Wednesday, September 30, 2026**. For more information or to register your school, please visit the California Student Mock Election web page at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/studentmockelection>.

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Additional Civic Engagement Resources

Youth and High School Programs: Toolkits, program details, and classroom resources are available at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/high-school-programs>.

Student Poll Workers: Under *Education Code* Section 48205(a)(12), students in grades 6–12 may receive one excused absence per year to participate in a civic or political event with prior notice. More information is available at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/high-school-programs#pollworker>.

The California Secretary of State's Office, county elections officials, and the California Department of Education are available to support schools and districts in these efforts. By working together, we can help students better understand the democratic process and encourage civic participation.

For questions about High School Voter Education Weeks, the 2026 California Student Mock Election, voter registration resources, or other student civic engagement opportunities, please contact the California Secretary of State's Outreach and Education team at SOSOutreach@sos.ca.gov or **916-584-3538** or the California Department of Education High School Innovations and Initiatives Office at HSIIO@cde.ca.gov or **916-319-0893**.

Sincerely,



Tony Thurmond
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



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California Secretary of State

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