



California Department of Education

Tony Thurmond, *State Superintendent of Public Instruction*
1430 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-5901
916-319-0800

California Secretary of State

Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., *Secretary of State*
1500 11th Street, 6th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814
916-653-7244

February 9, 2026

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

High School Voter Education Weeks (April 13-24, 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 a critical part of that effort. We invite districts and school sites to take part in these statewide civic engagement opportunities during the 2025-26 school year.

High School Voter Education Weeks will take place on **Monday, April 13 through Friday, April 24**. 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, nearly 1.5 million students have preregistered to vote, resulting in more than 1.1 million eligible voters.

In addition to High School Voter Education Weeks, the California Secretary of State (SOS) 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 gives students a hands-on opportunity to experience the voting process, understand how elections work, and see how their voices matter. After ballots are counted, students can compare their results with peers across California.

School registration for the 2026 California Student Mock Election opens **Monday, April 13, 2026**. Only one registration is permitted per school, so we encourage staff to coordinate and designate a Mock Election Coordinator for each campus. Schools that register by **Wednesday, September 9, 2026**, will receive a welcome packet that includes an informational letter, "Save the Date" posters, High School Poll Worker recruitment flyers, and California Student Mock Election "I Voted" stickers. Schools may choose to receive Student Information Voter Guides and ballots electronically or by paper. Electronic materials are available through the SOS Tools for Success web page at

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/studentmockelection/tools-success>.

February 9, 2026

Page 2 of 2

Schools may also support civic engagement by hosting voter registration or preregistration drives. In California, eligible 16- and 17-year-olds may preregister to vote, and their registration becomes active when they turn 18. Eligible students may preregister online using California's Online Voter Registration system at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>. Students may also preregister during a driver license or state ID transaction through the California Department of Motor Vehicles. If eligible and not opted out, their information is securely transmitted to the Secretary of State's Office.

Additional resources to support school and district efforts include:

- **Youth and High School Programs:** Toolkits, program details, and classroom resources are available on the SOS High School and Youth Initiatives web page at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/high-school-programs>.
- **Student Poll Workers:** Under Senate Bill 955, 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 thoughtful participation.

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

Sincerely,



Tony Thurmond
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
Secretary of State

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