

Civics for All and Mock Elections:

In concert with materials from the models below, Seattle Public Schools could easily develop its own simple K-12 mock elections/media literacy curricula.

Mock elections websites/curricular models:

- 1) <https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/mock-election/#/landing> - WA State
- 2) <https://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/mock-election> - Sandra Day O'Connor's organization
- 3) <http://www.youthleadership.net/learning-programs/mock-election/> - University of Virginia's superlative materials
- 4) <http://www.nationalstudentparentmockelection.org/> - Includes parent engagement option
- 5) <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/partners/kids-voting-usa/> - KidsVotingUSA K-12

Preparation time to vote:

Different teachers will take different amounts of time to vote: some might take just a few days to review the issues/races in September, October, or early November while others might take a week or more to prepare students to vote.

Age - appropriate voting:

Grades K-4 - mock elections are less tied to real elections and are more hands. For example, K-2 students might vote on their favorite animals and learn about their status in the wild, while grades 3 and 4 may look at more conceptual topics like [how democracy affects their every day lives and households](#)., as per the [KidsVotingUSA](#) curricula.

Grades 5 - 12 - students can begin to tackle real time election issues, often by being given assignments to engage their parents in the learning.

Choosing Topics/Races to Vote on:

Schools (in particular social studies departments) can choose the number or type of topics they want their students to learn about and vote on. Materials for a broad range of "real-time" topics as well as proposed legislation would be made available to all via the state/city voter's guides as well as materials loaded onto the district website so teachers can share / use materials without reinventing the wheel from school to school, etc. In major elections such as presidential races and mayoral races it would be understood that most if not all schools would vote on those topics, again, using shared materials for efficacy and expediency. K- 4 voting would be with age appropriate materials – see below.

2 types of Voting

- 1) Voting on "real" state initiatives, legislative races, congressional races, mayoral races, school board races, and, of course, presidential races
- 2) Voting on proposed legislation/initiatives such as: examples - gun control measures proposed after the Parkland Massacre, the "head tax," state income tax, proposed luxury car tax initiative, etc.

A few fundamental questions/options to consider in doing mock elections themselves:

- 1) What are the various advantages and disadvantages of using different types of voting:
 - a) voting on paper ballots in classrooms or in mock voting booths on the day of the elections
 - b) voting online with the state website by scheduling library time for computer access prior to election day
 - c) voting on Schoology (the district student/teacher/family communication medium), or other method

Brief Notes on the actual voting process and options:

a) Paper ballots (either "real" from King County Elections or downloadable from the district civics webpage) offer many advantages, including they are tactile and "real" to students, collecting them and counting them offers great opportunities for student engagement and community participation as "elections officials," the results for your school are known quickly, etc. builds the CIVIC EXPERIENCE: kids students get the tactile experience of using the ballot, of putting their signature on the envelope/ballot; kids can vote en masse across the school in home – room, a designated period, or in their SS classes; also – I was told a few years ago by SOS that we could send them our ballot tallies to them for inclusion in their data bases

b) Online voting has its merits but requires voting more than a week before the election, is not tactile and as "real" as paper balloting, and, very importantly, the Secretary of State's system does not offer school by school returns information which detracts from the school community experience and hampers the accumulation of data - i.e. voter participation rates - from school to school - this data is essential to building competitions between schools for "voter participation rates"

c) Voting on Schoology in classrooms has many potential variables and could be useful in grades 6-12 perhaps

In voting a balance needs to be found between school/teacher/student preference and the need to have some measure of uniformity for expediency's sake, including voter participation competitions between schools!