

Seattle Public Schools and the Election Season:

***Student Voter Registration Drive ***

Helping students help their communities to get registered to vote and/or getting registered voters (parents) to actually turn out!

Hi Colleagues,

Listed below is “how to” information for elementary and grade 6-12 social studies teachers to engage K-12 students in mock elections via voter registration. **Voter registration** is an absolutely great civics education opportunity – and it takes very little time.

It is super easy to do - King County Elections will deliver you and/or your school the single page registration forms!

The educational goal of a voter registration drive is to provide students with the powerful and memorable civic experience of helping others to become active voters. Students are given all of the voter registration forms that they need to go out and get as many of their family members and eligible friends, neighbors, and community members as possible to sit down and fill out the simple, one page registration document. Students then turn in the form for credit, the teachers collect them, and the office mails them.

Note: for students who have parents/community members who are already registered the assignment becomes one of simply trying to get them to get out and vote. “Voting Commitment” worksheets will be available for such students – see below and on the separate PDF linked under [“Parent/guardian engagement”](#) in the white Requirements panel on the Civics for All website and in the Schoology Civics folder.

Crucial dates: for 2018

September 25th – National Voter Registration Day

October 8th, Voter Registration Deadline, **All online and paper registration must be emailed/mailed by this date!!! (or dropped off at KCE downtown)**

October 29th, In Person Voter Registration Deadline for New Voters

November 6th, Election Day

REGISTERING VOTERS IS EASY!!!!

THE TEACHER TO STUDENT TO FAMILY/COMMUNITY CONNECTION

King County Elections Headquarters is the contact for voter registration forms

919 SW Grady Way

Renton, WA 98057

206-296- 8683

206 – 296 – 5075 direct line to Matt Fowler, unofficial SSD registration advocate

matthew.fowler@kingcounty.gov

- **Call/email Mr. Fowler to order registration forms** – 3 registration forms per student is the average – some register none and some register 6 or more. Therefore, a school with 1000 students should get 3000 forms, while 4A schools might order more – which is equivalent to ten reams of copy paper or one box of it. It really depends on the school – some communities have much higher or lower percentage of registered voters.
- It is ok to have extras! The keep and can be returned or simply kept for future registration efforts.

For middle schools and high schools:

The process is extremely simple:

- 1) For high and middle schools it's most logical, efficient, and easiest when the student voter registration drive is carried out in social studies classes
- 2) Social studies departments should choose a registration "point person"
- 3) Point teachers at schools make call to King County Elections to have registration forms delivered or prepared for pickup
- 4) Forms are distributed to all students in each social studies class with haste (Oct 8 is coming up!)
- 5) Teachers spend 120 seconds reviewing how to fill in the form so students can make sure folks do it properly. Or more if necessary.
- 6) Students discuss, plan, and identify their "victims" for their registration sales pitch! You can give them whatever time you like. Get them to COMPETE to register the most – see below!!!
- 7) Students should have new voters fill out forms completely on the spot and then students "turn in" their registration forms for credit if you like.

That is all there is to it!!!

Related process info/ideas for K-12 planning, motivation, etc.

- 1) Clip boards can be very helpful in this vein of civic work – plus kids love them because it makes them feel more officious!
- 2) Participants can earn Community Service Learning Hours at most schools
- 3) Each student should attempt to register as many folks as possible, including: all family members, and at least 2-6 other adults - that has been a reasonable goal over the years – obviously the "availability" of folks to register will vary from neighborhood to neighborhood – ambitious students can go search out folks to register beyond the confines of their neighborhood
- 3) Participation can be maximized in many ways:
 - a. Have students COMPETE against one another in a given class (KIDS LOVE THIS), have your classes compete against other classes for most completed, turned in forms, whole grades can compete against one another, or even schools.
 - b. Encourage students to "Get the Vote Out" in their neighborhoods, places of worship, even the mall. It takes so little time and *is very rewarding for the students* - and brings their families into the school/politics nexus in a powerful way.

NOTE: for that percentage of kids who do not have social studies this fall, LA12 teachers could volunteer to be contacts for the election process

For elementary schools:

The process is extremely simple:

- 1) For Elementary schools – principals can work with staff to determine from which grade level up would be able to responsibly carry out the basic requirements of the process. 4th graders would likely be able to register voters perhaps.
- 2) A point person would have to be chosen and then simply follow the directions above, except:
- 3) Each classroom teacher would run the process out of her/his room.

Voter Registration/Get Out the Vote Rationale: Since they occur early in the year, voter registration drives offer: 1) a way to build unity within classrooms, departments, schools, 2) an opportunity for low-skilled kids to succeed and get off to a strong start in class, 3) leverage to increase student interest in the elections, 4) a memorable touchstone experience as your social studies class: a) moves forward for the rest of the year, and, b) as it studies the election and its aftermath, *including the anticipated analysis of how low voter turnout and registration issues affected the final vote* (this is a good issue to note/study in advance).