STUDENT VOTER ENGAGEMENT HANDBOOK

FAIR ELECTIONS CENTER

CAMPUS VOTE PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Campus Vote Project (CVP) works with administrators, faculty, students and local election officials to reduce barriers to student voting. Our mission is to help campuses institutionalize reforms that empower students with the information they need to register and vote. Students can play a critical role in changing the culture of their institution and ensuring all of their peers have access to voting now and in future elections.

A current college student and former Campus Vote Project intern lead the revitalization of the Student Engagement Handbook as a resource for her peers. To create this guide, Nicole Taylor interviewed CVP Student Advisory Board members, former Democracy Fellows, college administrative partners, CVP state staff, and other students to learn more about what would be most useful.

This handbook highlights tactics to encourage student voter engagement and provides step-by-step advice on how to achieve goals to increase student registration, voter education and voting on your campus. It also provides guidance on working with campus administrators and local elections officials (LEOs) to achieve your goals and create a sustainable, long-lasting program for you to leave as a legacy at your institution.

CVP offers a wide variety of resources that go beyond this handbook. We are happy to help you at every step of your planning and implementation process. For example, we can organize conference calls and webinars to answer your questions, share the experiences of other partners, and answer state-specific issues. We also offer state student guides with critical information about registering and voting in your state.

Contact us at info@campusvoteproject.org to start changing your campus today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM OUR 2018 STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

Campus Vote Project (CVP) works with universities, community colleges, faculty, students and election officials to reduce barriers to student voting. Our goal is to help campuses institutionalize reforms that empower students with the information they need to register and vote. We believe students should be at the front line of democratic engagement on their campus. As members of the Student Advisory Board, we are excited to lead and support CVP's efforts.

The Student Advisory Board (SAB) was launched in the spring of 2017 coming off a high energy presidential election to provide student leaders we had worked with in 2016 an opportunity to influence our work. As CVP continues to grow it's national reach, so does the SAB and the need for us to support an expanding group of student leaders who want to influence our democracy.

The Student Engagement Handbook provides a tested format for you to work with peers, administrators, and community members to engage fellow students. In the 2014 midterms, only 19.9% of 18-29-year-olds turned out to vote, the lowest turnout out in 40 years. We believe we can change this by making the most fundamental tools of campus organizing free and available to all students across the country. In the following document, you will find information ranging from planning a voter registration event to creating a sustainable plan for your campus after you're gone.

Our hope is that you will not only utilize this handbook for yourself, but also, share it with your peers, friends, and other students across the country. We welcome your feedback for future iterations and are happy to support your efforts now. You can connect with us at info@campusvoteproject.org.

Sincerely,

Lynette Quintero
Board Chair
University of California, Berkeley
sabchair@campusvoteproject.org

Jasym Mireles Venegas
Board Co-Chair
University of Texas at Austin
sabcochair@campusvoteproject.org

Nicole Taylor
Secretary
Hamilton College
sabsecretary@campusvoteproject.org

BARRIERS TO STUDENT REGISTRATION AND VOTING

BARRIERS TO STUDENT REGISTRATION AND VOTING

Students are often newer to the voting process and may even be in a new community or new state with different election laws then they are familiar too. Additionally, students can face unique challenges such as having the necessary proof of residency or identification for registering and voting. Below are some common barriers:

1. Lack of Knowledge

Students are less likely to register and vote if they feel they lack adequate knowledge about the voting process or policies and positions of candidates, or the connection between issues they care about and voting.

- You can work with your institution to deliver basic information about the process, dates, locations and requirements to register, request an absentee ballot, vote early, or on Election Day. Campus Vote Project has student voting guides (www.campusvoteproject.org/studentguides) covering these issues for all 50 States and DC.

- You can educate students on local, state, and national issues by creating an open dialogue. Host lunch discussions, organize events with speakers focused on topical issues, or create flyers highlighting the main points of important issues.

2. Residency

Symm v. United States, a 1979 U.S. Supreme Court case, upheld that students have the right to register and vote in the community where they attend college if they so choose.

- Contact your housing office for the street addresses of on-campus residence halls. If there is no address for a certain residence hall, contact your local elections office to find out what address students can put on their voter registration forms as their residential address.

- Residential addresses may differ from the mailing addresses students use on campus, so make sure students understand the difference and place them on the right lines on the voter registration application.

- Let students know they also have the right to register and vote at their home address.

3. Election Day Polling Location

Many students don't know their polling location.

- Find the polling location nearest to your campus by visiting Vote.org (www.vote.org/polling-place-locator) and organize a transportation system if it is far from campus. You can also work with administrators and your local elections office to bring a polling place or early voting site to your campus.

4. Early Voting Options

Many students don't understand options for early or absentee voting in their college community or at their home address.

- Options for early voting and absentee voting vary by state. Students are often unaware of options and deadlines to vote before Election Day, for their college address or their home address.

5. Local Election Officials

Keep local election officials informed of your efforts and see if they can help with voter registration or voter turnout events.

- Let the local election officials and volunteers at polling places know when you are arriving with large groups of students so they can prepare for the influx of voters.

There are significant statutory and non-statutory barriers to student voting such as:

1. ID Requirements

Students, especially out-of-state students, may lack the ID required to vote where they attend college.

- Our state student voting guides (www.campusvoteproject.org/studentguides) have information on voter ID laws for all 50 states and DC. You can also check if student IDs are accepted as voter ID in your state at www.campusvoteproject.org/administrators/student-id-as-voter-id.

2. Deadlines

Voters must be aware of deadlines to register, vote early, and apply for and return absentee or mail-in ballots.

- Check here www.vote.org/voter-registration-deadlines to see the deadline in your state to register before an election or when to submit your absentee ballot application. Check out the CVP state student voting guides (www.campusvoteproject.org/studentguides) for more information.

3. Confusion with Forms

Confusing language on forms can deter voters.

- Voter registration, absentee ballot applications, and other forms can be confusing. Call your local elections officials or CVP for assistance.

The best way to overcome these barriers is to help students make a plan well before registration deadlines and Election Day! Plan when and what students need to register to vote, and how, when, and where they are going to vote before or on Election Day. The "Help Students Make an Election Day Plan" section has more information on how!

GETTING STARTED: MAKING YOUR CAMPUS VOTER FRIENDLY

GETTING STARTED: MAKING YOUR CAMPUS VOTER FRIENDLY

There are many activities you can organize to help students register and vote, but first learn who on your campus can help, and gain an understanding of your state's registration and voting laws.

1. Learn About Existing Programming
2. Pick Your Goals
3. Find Support
4. Learn About Your State's Election Laws
5. Create a Campus Plan
6. Let Us Know How It Goes!

1. Learn About Already Existing Programming

Reach out to past and current student leaders, peers, faculty, and campus administrators to find out the programs already part of campus culture and their ideas of how to implement change. Meet with local election officials to learn about student registration and voting in your community, and recruit partners to join in your organizing efforts.

2. Pick Your Goals

CVP recommends that after learning about your own campus, you pick two to three goals for the next election.

Some examples of areas to base those goals on include:

- Register [X] students through tabling, orientation, and classroom talks before the voter registration deadline.
- Create a coalition of 10 on- and off-campus partners to start leading this work on a regular basis at your institution.
- Host four voter education events that have at least 25 attendees at each event.

3. Find Support

Partners like student government, clubs, organizations, professors, administrators, local community members, and the CVP team can help refine goals and get things done. When recruiting partners, outline expectations and the time commitment you expect from them.

4. Learn About Your State's Election Laws

Each state has varying rules about IDs, deadlines, how to cast a ballot, and more. Gain an understanding of your state's registration and voting laws so the information you distribute is accurate. You can contact CVP for advice or any questions on how to implement your plan. Check out our 50 state student voting guides at www.campusvoteproject.org/studentguides.

5. Create a Campus Plan

Coordinate with administrators, student groups, and local elections officials to form and implement a plan far in advance of Election Day. To see sample campus plans and the "Strengthening American Democracy" template for plans, please visit www.voterfriendlycampus.org. The Voter Friendly Campus program, a joint program of CVP and NASPA, accepts institutions during the Spring of midterm and presidential election years but updates and provides resources year-round.

6. Let us know how it goes!

CVP wants to support you in the process, post pictures of your events and tell us what worked well. Email info@campusvoteproject.org if you have questions or want to share more information on your accomplishments.

MEETING WITH COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

MEETING WITH COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

To facilitate lasting reform on campus, approach administrators and faculty on your campus for support. Since you are only on-campus for a few years, gaining administrative support is crucial, so advocate for and foster these relationships. Administrators are there to serve the students. They can help you navigate bureaucracy and make your campaign a sustainable and far-reaching project.

1. **Find the Right People**

   The right contacts in your campus administration will depend on your goals and the structure of your campus. Here are some suggestions to get started:

   • **Office of Civic Engagement** – start here if your school has one and if you're interested in establishing an ongoing institutional relationship between your campus and local elections office.

   • **Dean of Students/Dean of Student Life** – the Dean can provide support and point you in the right direction of other relationships to cultivate.

   • **Residential Life Department** – coordinate with Residential Life for projects like distributing registration forms, information about polling locations, and correct street addresses for residence halls when registering voters.

   • **Political Science Department** – faculty in the political science department can help by distributing registration forms in class and discussing voter education, they may also facilitate connections with other academic departments and have subject matter expertise when it comes to planning events like forums and debates. They can also involve faculty from other departments or promote programs through the Academic Senate.

2. **Set Up and Prepare for Meetings**

   It's important to walk into your meeting with a vision and a specific request for help. Treat this like a business meeting. Administrators have busy schedules so the more seriously you take the request and your preparation the more successful you'll be scheduling time and meeting goals.

   • Have a clear vision you can articulate in a few sentences
   For example: I am interested in increasing civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus by hosting nonpartisan voter registration drives with the support of college administrators. This will enable larger portions of the student body to participate in the electoral process, as my goal is to register 1,000 new voters during our first voter registration efforts. Your support will demonstrate to students that registering and voting is an important value to the college and our community.

   • Outline your plans of how to accomplish your goals.

   • Explain what you want the administration to do to assist your efforts.

   • Bring samples of posters, forms, etc. to show your organization and drive.

   • Stay optimistic! If the first person you talk to can't help you, be persistent until you find the right person.

3. Collaborate to Create a Campus Plan

After establishing clear "next steps" during conversations with administrators, make sure to:

- Send a thank you to them for taking the time to meet with you.
- Follow through on your promises and remind them of the next steps they committed to.
- Get administrators involved in your plan— collaborate with them on voter registration drives, Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts, presentations, and communication of events.
- Stay in communication with your contact to ensure they stay enthusiastic about your goals.

Contact CVP! We can help you every step along the way whether you are outlining your goals, identifying contacts, writing an introductory email, or collaborating on outreach to campus administrators.

MEETING WITH LOCAL ELECTIONS OFFICIALS

MEETING WITH LOCAL ELECTIONS OFFICIALS

Local Elections Officials (LEOs) are responsible for conducting elections in your community from maintaining voter registration rolls to producing ballots and supervising poll workers. Local elections officials have different names in different parts of the country, but they generally report up to the Secretary of State's office or a State Board of Elections. Find your LEO here https://www.fvap.gov/search-offices.

LEOs are an invaluable resource for information about voting in your community and state and can be helpful in organizing events or providing registration and early voting materials. Meet with LEOs well in advance of major deadlines and Election Day to ensure you have up-to-date information and to establish a lasting, mutually beneficial relationship.

What LEOs Can Do with You

LEOs provide many election-related services. Here are a few resources they may offer:

- Attending campus events such as move-in days or organization fairs to register voters and answer questions,
- Identifying and publicizing the appropriate street addresses and mailing addresses students should use for on-campus housing,
- Working with student government/organizations for registration opportunities throughout the year and providing training for voter registration volunteers,
- Providing voter education presentations, such as bringing voting machines to campus,
- Informing voters about deadlines, ID laws, residency requirements, polling locations, early voting, etc., and
- Recruiting and training students to serve as poll workers during elections.

Meeting with LEOs

1. Does your institution have an existing relationship with your LEO?

- A representative from your campus may already have a relationship with your LEO, possibly someone in student affairs or government relations.
- If they don't, ask them to join you for the first meeting with your LEO.

2. Know Your Goals

- Your goals may include voter registration, voting, or obtaining information about your district's deadlines, candidates, or polling locations.
- Make sure it's a specific goal or plan. For example, rather than a goal of "Increase voter registration numbers" it is better to be specific like, "Increase voter registration numbers by holding three voter registration drives."

3. Plan Your Meeting

- Base your introductory questions on your goals.
- At Campus Vote Project, we have experience helping students prepare for meetings with LEOs—contact us to schedule a planning session.

4. Contact Your Local Elections Office

- Tell them about your goals so they schedule a meeting with the right person.
- Ask them if there are issues they have seen in past elections that your campus and students should be aware of and help address.

5. Follow-up

- Follow up with a thank you note and updates on your project.
- Tell them when you are hosting events or plan to submit large numbers of voter registration forms.
- Connect LEOs with your administrative contact to organize events and exchange information.

Staying in touch and sharing information is the best way to maintain a good relationship and ensure your LEOs are available to help if problems arise.

Example Questions to Ask Your LEOs:

- If students live in campus housing or other non-traditional housing, what address information do they need to put on the registration form?
- Do you need an excuse to vote by absentee ballot?
- Do all students who live on campus vote at the same polling place? If not, can you help us identify who votes where?
- Do you need more poll workers for student-heavy polling places? How can students get involved?
- What are the most common problems students face when they try to register or vote in [your town/county/state]?
- Is early voting available? Where can students vote early?

STRATEGIES TO RAISE AWARENESS OF UPCOMING ELECTIONS

STRATEGIES TO RAISE AWARENESS OF UPCOMING ELECTIONS

The best way to increase student turnout in upcoming elections is by providing students with information. In addition to information about registration and voting, students need to know what offices are on the ballot, which candidates are running, the policy positions of candidates, and information on any issues that may also be on the ballot (schools, transportation, libraries, zoning, taxing issues, etc.).

1. **Publicity – Local, State, and Federal Elections. State and local elections often don't have the same excitement and publicity around them, especially on college campuses. This means it's up to you to remind students these elections are very important and can directly impact the issues they care about at the local level.**
   - Use social media, videos, and flyers that create a sense of community and positivity to inform students of major deadlines and upcoming elections.
   - Coordinate with your college president or another administrator to request they send campus-wide emails or texts reminding students of major deadlines and upcoming elections.
   - Work with administrators to organize issue forums that encourage productive political dialogue.
   - Host debates between all candidates running for a local or state office.
   - Host a lunch with speakers, like local leaders, who have issue expertise.
   - Organize campus-wide election rallies
     - Invite candidates, speakers, community guests
     - Hand out stickers, flyers, buttons, information sheets, etc. (CVP can help provide these materials)
     - Use fliers and social media and work with your campus newspaper to promote and advertise these events to your entire campus to increase turnout
   - Appear on campus radio stations or write for campus newspapers to discuss upcoming elections.
   - Ask professors to speak to their classes about the importance of civic participation and the different offices open for election.
   - Visit classrooms (with the permission of professors) and spend 5-10 minutes informing students of basic registration and voting information.

2. **Motivate students to get excited about local candidates and issues that affect their everyday lives, whether that is the cost of parking meters, public transit, or the local taxes taken out of their paychecks.**
   - Participating in local politics gives students an even louder voice in the way government affects the issues they encounter every day.

- Voting is habit forming—if students vote in local elections they are much more likely to vote in federal and state elections.

3. **Create a flyer** describing the ways local government affects students, particularly the roles of local offices and the current political issues being discussed.

4. **Have students fill out** Campus Vote Project Pledge to Vote cards where they write down why they want to vote or why they think voting is important.
   - Collect these cards with students' addresses or mailbox numbers and redistribute them near Election Day to remind students why they decided to vote and to make an Election Day plan.
   - You can even include their polling location if you know their address.
   - Campus Vote Project can provide samples of this material for you to adapt.

TIPS:
- Work with other student groups to distribute information about elections and events to ensure you reach broad demographics on campus.
- Providing food can increase turnout at any event. You cannot give food only to people that vote. Be sure to make it available to everyone who comes to the event.
- Recruit volunteers at every event to help with voter registration drives, future events, and Election Day activities. Follow up with volunteers after events to thank them for their help!

REGISTERING STUDENTS TO VOTE

REGISTERING STUDENTS TO VOTE

Nonpartisan voter registration drives led by students can be effective in registering large numbers of students to vote because they reach parts of the student population campaigns cannot. See www.nonprofitvote.org/documents/2016/10/seven-reasons-nonprofit-voter-registration.pdf

Voter Registration Education

The Higher Education Act requires most institutions of higher education to distribute voter registration forms to their students. Read this 2013 letter from the Department of Education explaining this requirement and the option to distribute forms electronically. See https://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN1317.html

As a student, you are uniquely positioned to work with administrators, local elections officials (LEOs), and Campus Vote Project (CVP) to raise awareness and institutionalize voter registration efforts on your campus. There are a variety of ways to do this.

Integrate voting information into your school website.

- Work with administrators to include links to state (www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state/) or federal (www.eac.gov/voters/national-mail-registration-form/) registration forms on the home page of your college website.

- Most states now offer the ability to register to vote online (OVR), however you generally must have a driver's license or state ID number to use these online voter registration systems. Including information about OVR and paper registration forms for your state as well as the federal form for out-of-state students interested in registering and voting at their home address.

- Make available CVP state student guides (campusvoteproject.org/studentguides) – these have deadlines, eligibility, answers to common questions and other state-specific registration information.

Create a webpage for civic engagement with election deadlines and ballot information.

- You can also work with administrators to provide information on frequently trafficked sites like the library homepage, course management pages such as Blackboard or Moodle, course registration pages, the bookstore page when students are purchasing textbooks, and school social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

- For an example check out www.mdc.edu/vote, www.gvsu.edu/service/democratic-engagement-programs-187.htm, and https://olce.uncg.edu/students/voting

Partner with administrators in student or academic affairs to send campus-wide emails with information about voter registration drives and election laws in your state to make it easy for

students to access registration and voting information.

- Include links to voter registration forms for your state (www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state) and CVP state student guides (campusvoteproject.org/studentguides).
- Attach social media graphics students can post and share with their network and multiply your reach. Contact CVP to ask what graphics they have available.
- For a simpler ask, go to your professors and ask them to share voting information with their classes via email or ask if they will allow you to speak to your peers before class about how to register and vote.

Organizing a Voter Registration Drive

Step 1: Research Requirements for Hosting a Drive in Your State

Fair Elections Center and Campus Vote Project provide guides on requirements for hosting a 3rd party voter registration drive. Visit, http://campusvoteproject.org/voter-registration-drive-guides, and reach out to CVP with questions beforehand. Only answer a question if you are complete sure of the answer, otherwise direct students to local election officials or get their contact information and follow-up with them.

Step 2: Find Support

To host a successful voter registration drive, gather support from school administrators, faculty, LEOs (www.fvap.gov/search-offices/), and student groups. Here are some places to start:

- Dean of Students
- Office of Civic Engagement
- Political science professors
- Student Government
- College Democrats, College Republicans, or other political student groups
- Partner with CVP and we can help you "make a plan", find contacts, and send you registration materials.
  - Be sure to recruit as many volunteers as possible throughout this step!

Step 3: Organize Your Event

- Reserve a space that has a lot of first-year student foot traffic, such as a university center, student union, or dining-area.
- If your state offers online voter registration, try to find a space with WiFi so you can set up computers, or tablets. This way you don't have to handle paper forms!
- Gather all the paper state (www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state) and federal (www.eac.gov/national-mail-registration-form/) forms you need.
- Make it fun! Bring stickers, candy, and food to draw crowds.
  Note that you generally cannot exchange something of value for someone's voter registration. This means if you are giving away food or items at your event make them available to folks who engage with you whether or not they register to vote. For more details contact Campus Vote Project.

Step 4: Advertise Your Event

- Make posters and flyers to hang around campus and to leave in residence halls and academic buildings.
- Announce your event on campus radio stations, television, newspapers, and social media.
- Partner with administrators and faculty to send emails detailing the location, time, and what information is needed to register.
- Ask faculty members to bring their classes to your voter registration drive or to tell their students to go, otherwise see if professors will all you to take five minutes of class time to register their students.

Step 5: Make a Plan to Return Forms

- If you collect paper forms determine where you need to send them and the deadlines for submitting them, always be sure to return forms as soon as possible after collecting them.

Step 6: Take Advantage of National Voter Registration Day

National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) is a nonpartisan national holiday started in 2012 and sees thousands of people register to vote every year. It takes place on the fourth Tuesday of September, and you can partner with NVRD (nationalvoterregistrationday.org) and join over 2,500 campuses and organizations in this yearly nationwide effort to register new voters.

Step 7: Share With Us

On the day of your voter registration drive, get excited, post on social media, and register new voters! Share photos with CVP at info@campusvoteproject.org or tag us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram and let us know how it goes.

Other Ways to Register Students to Vote

You may face some barriers to hosting your own voter registration drive such as the state having restrictive rules on 3rd party registration or having a lot of out-of-state students. Here are some others options for getting students registered to vote at your institution.

- Check to see if your state has online voter registration. If so, work with administrators, faculty, and social media to share links to online voter registration.
- Provide registration applications at new student orientations. For a long-term effect work with student government or administrators to integrate voter registration into all orientations on an annual basis.
- Leave voter registration cards in dining halls, academic buildings, mailboxes, residence halls, and classrooms with the permission of the campus.
- Work with residential life to create resident advisor programming.
  - They can make bulletin boards with voter registration applications.
  - Provide voter registration opportunities at residence meetings.
  - Canvass residence halls, if allowed, in the evenings to register new voters.

VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS

VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS

There's more to voting than just registration and turnout. Educating students as voters is critical to make them feel confident when casting a ballot. This can include everything from information on the process for registering and voting, what the ballot looks like, information about the candidates (from local to national), and any initiatives or referendums.

Candidate Education

It is important students are informed of the issues and policy positions of different candidates when they prepare to vote. Below are some ways you can gather and share information on candidates.

• **Contact local political parties to get literature on candidates running for office to help students make informed decisions—especially in local elections.**

• **Reach out to all political parties to remain politically neutral.**

  • A few ways to educate students on the candidates on the ballot include events like lunches, debates, presentations by local election officials (LEOs), and activities like distributing flyers in a student center.

• **Teach students how to identify biased information.**

  • Encourage students to consult multiple news sources for information on important issues and check their sources.

  • Give examples of types of websites that post reliable information, specifically, when it comes to local elections.

  • Show where to find trustworthy information about candidates' policy ideas.

  • Additional information and resources can be found at www.TheLamp.org and www.newseumed.org/collection/media-literacy-booster-pack.

• **Provide students with nonpartisan ballot guides such as www.vote411.org from the League of Women Voters or www.ballotready.com.**

  • Make sure materials include information and personal statements about each candidate for a particular office.

  • Explain the role and duties of each position up for election. When it comes to local offices, people are often unfamiliar of what decisions these offices make and how they impact their lives.

• **Promote educational programming in the classroom and at events.**

  • Encourage professors to provide a platform and invite candidates or representatives from political parties to inform students of policy positions and the election.

  • Encourage the College Democrats, College Republicans, College Libertarians, Young Greens and other student political groups to host similar forums to discuss their positions and candidates.

- Host "Common Ground" events on important ballot issues – these are events inviting advocates (i.e. candidates, party representatives, policy experts, campaign managers, etc.) on both sides of an issue (usually both political parties) to discuss chosen topics.
  - Invite candidates, campaign workers, professors, policy experts, journalists.
- Write articles, letters to the editor, or cartoons for student publications to reach student voters.
- If your institution receives a National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) report (see Sustaining Your Student Engagement Efforts) ask for access to the voter registration and turnout data for your campus.
  - Find out if certain demographics of the student population are registering or voting at lower rates.
  - Make sure to consider how to reach these under-represented segments of the student population in your outreach efforts and with the topics and issues you focus on. A national trend identified in the NSLVE data shows that students in the STEM fields have the lowest registration and voting rates. See https://idhe.tufts.edu/nslve/2016

Election Administration Information

Research shows that young people who are unfamiliar with the voting process, how to operate voting machines, or what the ballot looks like are less likely to vote.
See https://civicyouth.org/knowledge-about-voter-laws-still-lacking

- Sample ballots show students the format they will see when they vote. States are required to have sample ballots available prior to the election.
  - Go to your state's Secretary of State or State Board of Elections website or contact your Local Elections Office to find out when yours will be available.
- Send communications detailing locations of voting sites (www.vote.org/polling-place-locator), where students can look up their voting sites, whether early voting or Election Day, hours, etc.
  - Many states also have a specific platform people can use to look up their polling place and sample ballot prior to the election.
  - Include information on public or campus transportation options to reach voting sites not convenient to campus.
- CVP state student guides (www.campusvoteproject.org/studentguides)
  - For information for registration deadlines, to voter ID, to early, absentee, by-mail, to Election Day voting and everything in-between.
- Provide the Election Protection hotlines and website in case students encounter problems with the voting process and need assistance.
  - www.866ourvote.org and 1-866-OUR-VOTE (English)
  - 888-VE-Y-Vota (Spanish/English)
  - 888-API-Vote (Multiple Asian Languages/English)
  - 844-YALLA-US (Arabic/English)

HELP STUDENTS MAKE A VOTING PLAN

HELP STUDENTS MAKE A VOTING PLAN

Students are most likely to turnout to vote if they make a plan. Host events with volunteers helping students make a voting plan a few weeks ahead of time.

Use our state student voter guides (www.campusvoteproject.org/studentguides) to help students plan HOW, WHEN, and WHERE to vote.

HOW:

Help students decide whether to vote by absentee or mail-in, early, or in-person.

• Remind students they have the option to vote with their school or home address.

- If they are using their home address, make sure they plan ahead so they can vote absentee or by mail.

• Spread the word if voters need to show ID to vote and if so the different forms of acceptable voter ID on your school website, campus-wide emails, and at all your events.

- If possible in your state, work with school administrators and local elections officials (LEOs) far in advance of Election Day to make sure student IDs contain all the necessary components so students can use them when voting.

- Check with LEOs to see if there are ways schools can provide other forms of voter ID to students such as zero balance utility bills or housing rosters for address verification.

- Arrange a "Get ID" day with transportation to the DMV or other ID office and make sure to mention required underlying documents like a birth certificate or social security card.

WHEN:

Help students decide when they will vote—whether that is between classes on Election Day, during the operating hours of an early voting location, or a few weeks prior to the election by mail.
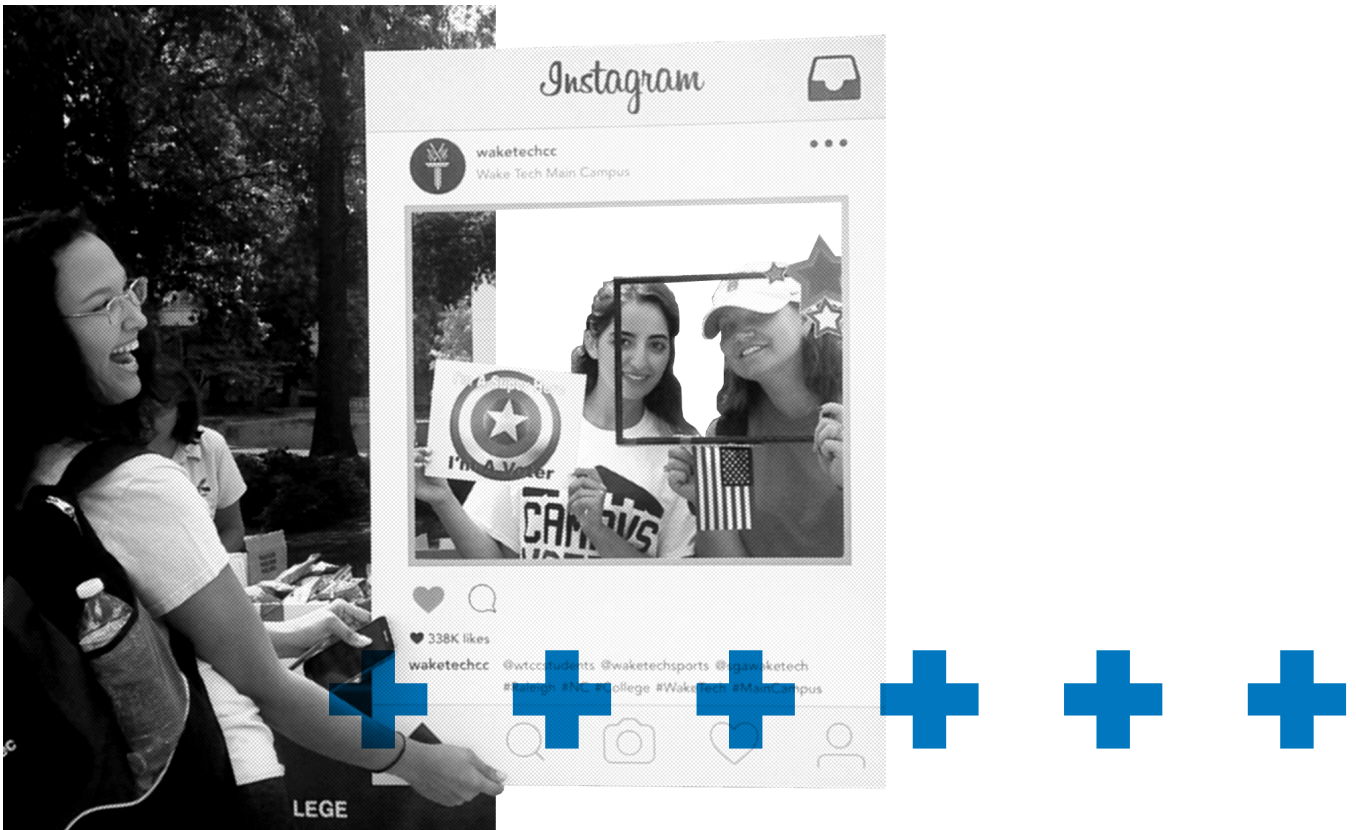
WHERE:

If students are voting in person, help students find their polling location using these a polling place locator like Vote.org (www.vote.org/polling-place-locator) or your state or local election officials website.

The most important part for in-person voters is how they will get to their polling place. Help students consider if their polling place is within walking distance, on-campus, or if they need to use public transportation.

- You can help students get to their polling location by working with administrators, faculty, student organizations, and municipality/city to organize free transportation for students.
  - See if your school will provide free shuttles to polling places.
  - Contact your municipality to find out if they offer free transportation for voters.
  - Organize volunteer carpools to nearby precincts.

TIPS:

- Have students write down their voting plans on postcards you can send back to them around Election Day. Campus Vote Project has examples you can use.
- Work with LEOs, college administrators, and faculty to start a student poll worker program—especially if you have an on-campus polling location!
- Student poll workers can create a friendly and welcoming voting environment to young voters and students may get paid or receive course credit for their work.
- Training to become a poll worker is rewarding. LEOs can help you bring training sessions to a location on your campus at a time convenient for students.
- There are other ways students can volunteer— GOTV efforts, as a poll watcher, etc.
- It is best to make your Election Day plan as early as possible so you don't miss crucial deadlines!

FOR STUDENT ORGANIZERS: ROAD TO ELECTION DAY TIMELINE

FOR STUDENT ORGANIZERS: ROAD TO ELECTION DAY TIMELINE

As a student organizer, you can begin planning voter registration, education, and mobilization activities as early as the spring semester before an election. Voting efforts happen year-round, so plan early.

SPRING SEMESTER:

January/February:

• See the "Getting Started: Making Your Campus Voter Friendly" section. This sheet has tips on how to learn about existing programming on your campus, where you can find support, different goals to set, and links to campus planning information.

• Remember to keep the events in your campus plan politically neutral so you can reach more potential voters.

Learn more about writing a campus plan and how to get recognition for it at www.voterfriendlycampus.org.

March/beginning of April:

• After you've written a draft of your campus plan, you can contact local elections officials for their thoughts (see "Meeting with Local Elections Officials") and delegating duties and tasks.

• If there are primaries for the upcoming election that occur before the end of the spring semester, you can organize primary election events including:

  • Advertising your state's primary elections with posters, flyers, and emails from your campus administrators, faculty, and student groups.

  • Voter registration drives—some states have "closed primaries" so research how party affiliation affects students' ability to participate in primary elections and then students know about their options. (See "Registering Students to Vote.")

  • Begin voter education efforts to help students learn about registering, voting, and the candidates. See "Voter Education Campaigns."

  • Organize Get Out The Vote (GOTV) activities (see October below for ideas) for primary elections in your state.

End of April/May:

• Schedule an end-of-semester meeting for your campus plan team.

• Finish your primary election GOTV efforts.

• Think ahead to the Fall Semester. Are there proposals for funds, events, and programs that need to be submitted to prior to the start of the semester. Are there orientation or welcome activities that occur over the summer or at the beginning of the semester that could include voter registration and voter education components that need to be planned for?

FALL SEMESTER:

September:

Week 1:

Start planning your National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) (www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org) event! See "Registering Students to Vote."

Week 2:

Begin completing tasks for NVRD and other voter registration programs.

Week 3:

Advertise your NVRD event. Share the NVRD graphics. Train volunteers to support voter registration events.

Week 4:

Have an awesome NVRD!

October:

Week 1:

• Have residential life require resident advisors to include voter education in their residence halls.

- • Bulletin boards with voter information
- • Conduct residence programming on voter registration and how to vote
- • Passing out reminders to vote to residents

• Post and share your school's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram posts with Election Day graphics.

Week 2:

• Ask local candidates or a campaign representative (remain politically neutral by asking all candidates for a certain office) to speak on campus, possible events include:

- • Luncheon promoting civil dialogue about election
- • On-campus debates
- • Campaign speeches
- • Issue forums relevant to upcoming election topics

• Write a blog post for your school website about why you vote and the importance of voting to your campus community.

• Write an article about the local, state, or federal elections in a student publication, or submit a letter about the importance of voting.

Week 3:

• Craft campus-wide emails reminding students of everything they need to know before Election Day and work with administrators to send the emails to the campus. Have them come for a recognizable figure on campus such as the President, Mascot, or student leader. These should include:

- • Registration deadlines (if applicable)
- • Nearest polling locations (www.vote.org/polling-place-locator)

- Deadline to send in absentee or vote-by-mail ballot
- Candidates up for election
- Voter ID requirements
- Services available to transport students to polling places
- Hours of polling locations
- Access to early voting
- Volunteer opportunities

Week 4:

• Ask your administrative contact, preferably the dean of students or college president, and professors to write an all-campus email reminding students why they should vote—create a sense of community and inclusiveness among voters.

• Post and share your school's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram posts with Election Day graphics.

• Send back Pledge to Vote postcards that students filled out during your "Raising Awareness of Elections" campaign.

• Inform students about the Election Protection hotline (1-866-OUR-VOTE), which can be used by anyone on or before Election Day. Check www.866ourvote.org for more details and for hotlines with language support in Spanish, Arabic, and multiple Asian languages.

• Let students know if your district has same day registration.

• Canvass residence halls, if allowed, with flyers and literature on the upcoming election.

November:

Week 1:

• Send out links to GOTV volunteer activities with nonpartisan organizations.

• Help students finalize their Election Day plans.

• On Election Day, send out reminders and post photos of volunteers and voters being engaged.

• Plan an activity to raise the visibility of Election Day on-campus, from having a march to the polls to throwing a party in the middle of campus.

Week 2:

• Send thank yous to volunteers, committee members, administrators and LEOs who helped you execute your student engagement plan.

• Schedule a debrief to discuss how your plan went with your team and partners and identify lessons learned that can be used to improve your efforts in future years.

SUSTAINING YOUR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

SUSTAINING YOUR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

After introducing programming and establishing relationships with local elections officials (LEOs) and college administrators, there are steps you can take to sustain your efforts for years to come. Institutionalizing the events you organized so future leaders can continue this project is crucial to keeping students civically engaged.

Focus Areas for Long-Term Efforts:

• It is important for future student leaders to keep their efforts focused on informing students about the different processes to register and vote, and how to be civically engaged in their community.

• Being proactive and creating a network and community is critical to sustaining your work.

   This can include:

   • LEOs

   • College administrators

   • Faculty members

   • Partnerships with student organizations

How to Foster Relationships with LEOs, College Administrators, and Student Volunteers:

• During the planning stages of your events, make their role as easy as possible! Provide them with all the information, training, and materials they could need.

• Thank them after every event for all of their help, and debrief for feedback on how the programming was successful and how it could be improved.

• Continue to reach out for future programming and establish a long-term relationship.

• Introduce them to students who will take over after you graduate.

Other Ways to Sustain Progress:

Ask school administrators to sign up for:

• National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) Reports (idhe.tufts.edu)

   • NSLVE is an initiative of Tufts University's Institute for Democracy and Higher Education (IDHE) which offers colleges and universities a free opportunity to learn their student registration and voting rates.

   • You can share this report with CVP to receive feedback and help modifying your campus plan for next year.

   • We can also help you find out how to qualify for awards and attend conferences for NSLVE and Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE)[1] related programming.

- Voter Friendly Campus Designation (www.voterfriendlycampus.org)
  - The VFC designation program was started through a partnership of CVP and NASPA in 2016, and helps institutions develop campus plans to engage student voters and set clear goals for institutionalizing student civic learning and democratic engagement programming.
  - Campuses are evaluated and granted the designation after they execute their plan to help students register and vote.
  - This involves administrators and faculty in your efforts and helps you (as a student organizer) develop a lasting plan.
- **Bring a polling place to your campus!**
  - Contact administrators and LEOs to learn how to bring a polling place to your campus, ask:
    - If your campus is eligible to host a polling location
    - If bringing an early voting site to campus has different requirements
  - Before contacting LEOs (www.fvap.gov/search-offices) and administrators, identify possible locations for a voting place—particularly spots that are easily accessible by students, community members, and elderly or disabled persons. Come up with a budget (if necessary) and a plan to present to the Elections office when making your formal request.
    - Contact CVP with questions or for help with your plan to bring a voting site to campus.

As a student activist, if your state does not already use automatic or online voter registration, write letters, emails, and make phone calls to your state representative to institute these positive changes. This can help eliminate many of the barriers to student voter registration. CVP can also help you analyze and promote other election administration improvements to benefit students and all voters in your state.

[1]CLDE- promoting the education of students for engaged citizenship through democratic participation in their communities, respect and appreciation of diversity, applied learning and social responsibility

www.fairelectionscenter.org I info@fairelectionscenter.org I (202) 331-0114

www.campusvoteproject.org I info@campusvoteproject.org I (202) 331-0114