

Democracy Central

New in 2012!



A Teachers Guide to California's Statewide Elections

Debra Bowen
Secretary of State



Tom Torlakson
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

www.sos.ca.gov/elections/studentmockelection.htm

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EDUCATING FOR DEMOCRACY

California Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools



This is a publication of the California Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, a collaboration of Constitutional Rights Foundation, Center for Civic Education, and the Alliance for Representative Democracy.

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Introduction

Since 2008, the California Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools has been working with Secretary of State Debra Bowen to prepare a collection of lesson plans and classroom activities to help students discover the importance of elections and the power of their vote in our democracy. Called *Democracy Central: A Teachers Guide to California's Statewide Elections*, its materials have been widely used by teachers across the state.

Democracy Central was originally developed as a resource for teachers whose students would be taking part in the [MyVote California Student Mock Election](#), which is co-sponsored this year by Secretary Bowen and Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. However, we hope you will find the Democracy Central collection useful in non-election years, too.

With the “New In 2012!” volume we are introducing three lessons intended to help students understand the origins of political parties and become informed voters. Please note that all of the lessons and activities in the Original Volume of *Democracy Central*, created in 2008, and the “New In 2010!” Companion Volume are suitable for use in any federal, state, or local election.

The [Constitutional Rights Foundation](#), on behalf of the [California Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools](#), selected and created material that is in line with California's 8th, 11th and 12th-grade History-Social Science standards. Students in 9th and 10th grade would also benefit from the many opportunities here to develop their critical thinking and civic participation skills. The lessons are also aligned with the [Civic Mission of Schools Proven Practices](#).

For young people, taking part in a mock election at school can be the first step toward becoming a lifelong voter. We encourage you to participate in the [MyVote California Student Mock Election](#), and help your students gain further firsthand experience with elections while serving their community as a [High School Poll Worker](#).

Overview of New in 2012 Lessons

How American Political Parties Began

What the students do: Read about how political parties began and examine a chart describing some of Hamilton's and Jefferson's views. Select views they think were important both during the founding period and today.

Slogans in Presidential Elections

What the students do: Explore, analyze, and evaluate the historical uses of advertising slogans in electoral campaigns.

Where do the Candidates Stand?

What the students do: Explore, analyze, and evaluate current interactions between citizens, mass media, and presidential candidates during election campaigns.