

THE STUDENT CIVIC AND VOTER EMPOWERMENT ACT

Implementation Guide



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STUDENTSVOTE**PROJECT**
CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

Program Overview

California Students Vote Project (SVP)

Established in 2016, the California Secretary of State (SOS) Students Vote Project (SVP) is a statewide nonpartisan program that elevates college student voices and promotes civic engagement efforts to build a more inclusive democracy. Through the creation of the Students Vote Project, California was the first state in the nation to build partnerships across the state's major higher education systems to empower students to participate in the democratic process. Program objectives include increasing college student voter education, voter registration, and outreach. The SVP achieves these objectives by hosting civic engagement events, creating educational resources, and partnering with campuses and outreach organizations.

One civic engagement event that occurs during statewide election years is the **California University and College Ballot Bowl**. Created in 2018, the Ballot Bowl is a friendly competition where all California higher education systems can compete to register the most students to vote.

The Student Civic and Voter Empowerment Act (SCVEA)

In 2019, the Student Civic and Voter Empowerment Act (**California Education Code §66850-66852; California Elections Code §2148.5**) was enacted to give California colleges and universities the necessary tools to increase civic engagement and participation among young voters. In 2020, the California Secretary of State Students Vote Project was expanded to support and ensure implementation of the landmark law. The law requires the California SOS to work directly with the California Community Colleges (CCCs) and California State Universities (CSUs) to increase college student voter registration. Colleges and universities are encouraged to participate in SVP civic learning opportunities to receive and distribute voter education resources. While the University of California (UC) and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) campuses are not required to participate, they continue to be strong partners and supporters of student civic engagement.



The Student Civic and Voter Empowerment Act (SCVEA) Requirements

The six components outline the SCVEA requirements to help establish clear pathways for California State Universities and California Community Colleges to promote civic learning and engagement among college students. Even though, the University of California and the Association of Independent California Universities campuses are not obligated to participate, they can use it as a guide to institutionalize civic engagement.

Civic engagement resources, including email templates and social media content, can be requested from the California Secretary of State Students Vote Project, and are available on the website at <https://studentsvoteproject.sos.ca.gov>.

Component 1 - Civic and Voter Empowerment Coordinator (CVEC)

Each campus must hire or appoint a nonpartisan Civic and Voter Empowerment Coordinator (CVEC) to serve as a liaison between the campus and the California Secretary of State.

The CVEC leads the creation of a Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan (CVEAP) with a cohort of faculty, students and administrators from student affairs, academic affairs and government relations or a similar office.

Component 2 - Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan (CVEAP)

The Civic and Voter Empowerment Coordinator (CVEC) drafts a Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan (CVEAP) for every two academic years. The updated CVEAP should be submitted to the California Secretary of State Students Vote Project via email to caststudentsvote@sos.ca.gov by midnight on October 1 of each even-numbered year.

The CVEC is required to invite campus leadership to participate in meetings to develop the CVEAP. Campus leadership includes faculty, students, student affairs department, academic affairs department and government relations or a similar office.

A CVEAP must include minimum of three election outreach events each academic year.

Component 3 - Campus Events

During each academic year, conduct a minimum of three election outreach events to increase civic learning, democratic participation, civic engagement, consistent voter turnout and community building. Events can be virtual or in person.

In each even-numbered year, there must be an event within the final 30 days preceding a statewide primary election and an event within the final 30 days preceding a statewide general election.

Please note that these events can count towards the minimum event requirement and can be a part of your campus's Civic and Voter Empowerment Action Plan.

Component 4 - Campuswide Emails

During the first month of each academic semester or quarter, each campus is required to distribute campuswide emails to all students with the following civic and election dates and information:

- The statewide primary and statewide general election dates.
- The last day to register to vote online, by mail or in-person.
- National Voter Registration Day
 - o Held annually on the fourth Tuesday in September.
- The date when counties begin to offer early voting at the county elections official office or at a satellite location.
 - o Inform students that the date, times and locations for early voting and conditional voter registration may be confirmed on the internet website of the California Secretary of State or at the county elections office.
 - o Early voting information: <https://earlyvoting.sos.ca.gov>
 - o Conditional voter information:
<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/same-day-reg>
- Inform students that a vote-by-mail voter may vote in person at the office of the county elections official or at a satellite location established by the county elections official on or before the day of the election.
- The California Secretary of State Students Vote Project website.
 - o <https://studentsvoteproject.sos.ca.gov>

Statewide Election Years Only

One month before each statewide election, each campus must distribute campuswide emails to all students with specific election information. The campuswide emails should include the civic and election dates and information mentioned in the section **above and the following**:

- The California Secretary of State college student voter registration website:
 - o <https://registertovote.ca.gov/?t=s>
- The California Secretary of State general election website:
 - o <https://vote.ca.gov>

- ☑ The California Secretary of State voter information guide website:
 - <https://voterguide.sos.ca.gov>
- ☑ The California Secretary of State voter registration status tool:
 - <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov> or a similar web page that directs the recipient to voter or election information for the county of the recipient.
- ☑ Include the following disclaimers:
 - The civic and election information provided applies to the county where the campus is located.
 - Election information varies by county.
 - Email recipients are encouraged to check the internet website containing the California Secretary of State voter registration status tool, or a similar website, to find election information for the county where the recipient's voter registration is active.

Component 5 - Campus Academic Calendar

Each campus is required to include the election dates specified in the emails in both printed and electronic academic calendars shown below:

- ☑ The statewide primary and statewide general election dates.
- ☑ The last day to register to vote online, by mail or in-person.
- ☑ National Voter Registration Day
 - Held annually on the fourth Tuesday in September.
- ☑ The date when counties begin to offer early voting at the county elections official office or at a satellite location.



Component 6 - Campus Social Media

At least one day before each event occurs, unless specified otherwise, post social media reminders for students about:

- The statewide voter information guide and county voter information guide.
- The date when counties begin to offer early voting at the county elections official office or at a satellite location.
 - o The date, times and locations for early voting and conditional voter registration can be confirmed with the California Secretary of State links below or at the county elections office.
 - ▶ <https://earlyvoting.sos.ca.gov>
 - ▶ <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/same-day-reg>
- Election day: Include a reminder the day before and the day of the election.
 - o The reminders shall state the following:
 - ▶ A qualified voter may register to vote on the day of the election, if necessary, at a conditional voter registration site established by the voter's county elections official.

Special Elections

During special elections, campuses are not required to perform comprehensive social media and email outreach but are strongly encouraged to do so. The California Secretary of State Students Vote Project will continue to be a resource but campuses will not be required to submit CVEAPs specifically for the special elections.

Contact Us

SVP Email

For any questions regarding SVP, please email us at caststudentsvote@sos.ca.gov.

SVP Office Hours

Office Hours are a designated time when the SVP team is available to provide support, guidance, and resources. Office Hours are currently held on Thursdays from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM PT.

- Schedule a time: <https://calendar.app.google/NTa8ynPEyj73w6k8>
- To meet outside Office Hours, email us at caststudentsvote@sos.ca.gov to schedule an alternative time.

SVP Website



View our latest resources and updates on our website at <https://studentsvoteproject.sos.ca.gov> or scan the QR code.

Subscribe for Updates

To receive updates, [subscribe to our email list](#).

