



# ALEX PADILLA

## California Secretary of State

### Guidance for School Administrators and Teachers

Thank you for visiting the California Secretary of State's High School and Youth Initiatives website and for your interest in joining our efforts to increase opportunities for voter registration amongst students across our state.

This guidance will assist you in helping your students learn more about California's voter registration process. Your students will have varying levels of experience with the electoral process. Some students will come from personal or family backgrounds with an extensive history of civic and electoral engagement while others may not. You play a key role in educating students about the election process and voter registration.

Before asking whether students would like a voter registration form to complete, we recommend that you review with your students the specific criteria required for voter registration. To register to vote in California, you must be:

- ✓ A United States citizen
- ✓ A resident of California
- ✓ 18 years old or older on Election Day (or 16 and 17 years old to pre-register to vote)
- ✓ Not currently in state or federal prison or on parole for the conviction of a felony (for more information on the rights of people who have been incarcerated, please see the Secretary of State's [Voting Rights: Persons with a Criminal History](#))
- ✓ Not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court (for more information, please see [Voting Rights: Persons Subject to Conservatorship](#))

In walking students through the eligibility requirements, the following guidance may be helpful in addressing questions your students may have:

- Students may mistakenly believe that because they are a resident of California that they are also United States citizens—please ensure that students fully understand the citizenship requirements and if students are uncertain as to their eligibility, to refrain from completing a voter registration card until they've determined their eligibility.
- Students may travel out of state, spend time out of the country, or have previously attended school out of state, but if their principal residence is in California, then they are a resident of California for voter registration purposes. If students move and change their principal residence after they have registered, they may update their address by visiting

<https://registertovote.ca.gov/>. Additionally, for students planning to attend college, please visit our website for College Students and Voters Living Abroad at [www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/students/](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting-resources/voting-california/students/).

- Even though students may be enrolled in driver's education and/or applying for a driving permit at the age of 15½, they must be 16 or 17 years old in order to pre-register (and meet the other eligibility requirements).

Other helpful guidance includes the following:

- Extra credit or any other incentive must not be offered to students in exchange for them registering to vote or voting in an election.
- Ensure students understand that the opportunity to register to vote is optional and may be completed at another time, including by visiting the Secretary of State's mobile-friendly online voter registration tool at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>.

- Some students may feel more comfortable completing a voter registration form in a language other than English. The Secretary of State provides translated election information and voter registration in the following languages: Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese. For online voter registration in these nine languages, please visit: <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>. For translated election information, please visit:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • <a href="#">Election Information</a> – English | • <a href="#">선거 정보</a> – Korean                   |
| • <a href="#">選舉信息</a> – Chinese                 | • <a href="#">Información Electoral</a> – Spanish  |
| • <a href="#">चुनाव जानकारी</a> – Hindi          | • <a href="#">Impormasyon sa Halalan</a> – Tagalog |
| • <a href="#">選挙情報</a> – Japanese                | • <a href="#">ข้อมูลการเลือกตั้ง</a> – Thai        |
| • <a href="#">ព័ត៌មានបោះឆ្នោត</a> – Khmer        | • <a href="#">Thông tin bầu cử</a> – Vietnamese    |

- If students choose not to register to vote, are ineligible to register to vote, or do not know if they are eligible to vote, they can still get involved in the election process!
  - **Volunteer to Register Other Students to Vote.** Your students can still get involved in the election process by registering others to vote and promoting voter registration efforts. There are no eligibility requirements in California for volunteering to register others to vote. However, please note that when registering others to vote, if the volunteer receives the completed voter registration form from the applicant or the applicant requests that the volunteer fill out the form on their behalf (put pen to paper), then the volunteer must complete the section titled, “Did someone help you fill out or deliver this form?” This section requests the volunteer’s signature, name, address, and phone number.
  - **Student Poll Worker Program.** Your students may also get involved by becoming a student poll worker.\* Eligibility requirements include:

- Be a United States citizen or legal permanent resident
- Be at least 16 years old on Election Day
- Attend a public or private high school
- Have at least 2.5 grade point average
- Get permission from parents and school

\*Students may also be eligible for a stipend ranging from \$65 to \$150 and are encouraged to contact their county elections official for more information.

Thank you for your support in increasing voter registration opportunities for students across California.