



**Secretary of State  
Alex Padilla  
Memorandum of Understanding**

**Overview**

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) sets forth the mutual commitments by Secretary of State Alex Padilla and The California Community Colleges

("Parties") system to increase voter engagement by students being served by colleges and universities across California. Both Parties recognize their shared goal of increasing the democratic engagement and civic literacy of the student body. By working together, both Parties can amplify the reach and strength of their efforts that will result in students having an even greater voice in the democratic process.

**Introduction: The State of Student Civic Engagement**

The success of our state and nation depends on the active participation of educated and informed citizens and residents. However, we are not adequately providing access to the civic process and we are failing to inspire and inform students about the importance of civic participation in our students.

Today's college students are part of the largest generation in history, the Millennial Generation. This generation—born between 1978 and 1996—exceeds the Baby Boomer generation by 9 million. The sheer size of the Millennial Generation points to the major role it will play in upcoming elections and the political discourse. The Millennial Generation is uniquely positioned to make vital decisions in an increasingly globalized world. It is essential to ensure that this generation – charged with such colossal responsibility – is engaged in our democracy and that as educators and leaders we provide students the tools they need to take action and participate.

A few sobering facts tell the story; The United States recently ranked the 139<sup>th</sup> in voter participation of 172 democracies around the world; Only 52% of eligible California youth were registered to vote in California before the November 2014 election and only 8% of eligible youth turned out to vote. This was the lowest turnout of any age group; in the same year, *only 0.3% of the total students served by public colleges and universities in California were registered through online voter registration opportunities they were provided.*

It doesn't have to be this way. By taking an active role, both parties to this MOU recognize the meaningful impact they can make on youth voter registration and turnout outcomes during the 2016 elections. Accordingly, both signatories to this MOU are committed to the following actions:

**For Superintendent/President Kathryn E. Jeffery on behalf of the Santa Monica Community College District:**

I, the undersigned, am committed to the civic engagement of students on our campuses. Our institutions recognize that voting is the cornerstone of our democracy, the means of a representative government. We will play a role in advancing youth civic participation on our campuses. Accordingly, we are committed to the following actions to institutionalize voter engagement at our colleges and universities across the state:

## OUTREACH

1. We will initiate the development of a comprehensive plan to support civic engagement. We will work effectively to implement the plan within two months of signing this document.
2. We will collaborate with the Secretary of State's office and additional partners as appropriate to provide opportunities for students to complete an online voter registration form upon class registration and if feasible, upon enrollment, by prioritizing and highlighting these messages on high-traffic campus webpages.
3. We will send all-campus emails and social media messages reminding students and employees to register to vote prior to the Presidential Primary and General Elections and will provide a link to register to vote online with other relevant information about voting.
4. We will actively promote, and participate in National Voter Registration Day.
5. We will send all-campus emails and social media messages before and on Election Day to remind students to vote, inform them of the appropriate voting location, hours of voting, nonpartisan educational materials about the candidates on the ballot, and any other information that facilitates or maximizes their willingness to vote.

## TECHNOLOGY

6. We will direct the appropriate staff to develop a plan with the Secretary of State's office to implement software that pre-populates online voter registration forms with as much information as practicable.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

7. We will adopt, modify, and/or maintain policies that allow for and encourage nonpartisan voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote efforts by student organizations. These policies should:
  - a. Allow full access to high traffic locations by student organizations to set up tables and/or clip boarding events to actively reach out to the student body.
8. Send a communication to all faculty and staff encouraging them to support voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts in their classrooms, both directly and by allowing access to student organizations conducting voter engagement drives.
9. We will ensure all changes to polling places currently located on campus are done with the appropriate prior approval of the county registrar.
10. If a polling place is not currently on campus we will work with local elections officials to secure one or more centralized polling sites on or directly adjacent to campus and we will inform students about the location.
11. We will continue to meet our obligation under the voter registration provision of the Higher Education Act of 1998, to "make a good faith effort to distribute a mail voter registration form, requested and received from the State, to each student enrolled in a degree or certificate program and physically in attendance at the institution, and to make such forms widely available at the institution."
12. We will continue to meet the intent of the Student Voter Registration Act by providing every college student a meaningful opportunity to apply to register to vote.

## CAMPUS RESOURCES

13. We will invest institutional resources to promote election awareness using campus offline content, such as a promotional campaign with posters and banners that saturate the campus with vote messages.
14. We will invest institutional resources by integrating voter engagement into our office(s) of service learning, civic engagement, and/or student affairs.
15. We will provide permanent financial resources to support voter engagement efforts by student government associations and nonpartisan campus vote coalitions.

We will encourage other college and university presidents to join this effort and become signatories to this commitment or to adopt similar commitments.

As the chief elections official for the State of California, I recognize the important role leaders can play in facilitating youth voter engagement. Accordingly, my office and I are committed to the following actions to help students become knowledgeable, responsible and engaged voters:

**OUTREACH**

1. We will support your University, either directly or through connections to nonpartisan civic organizations, in the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan to increase youth civic engagement.
2. We will work directly with your University's office, schedule permitting, to host voter engagement events on campus at which I, Alex Padilla, will personally be present.
3. We will promote your activities and efforts through our office's communications and media team.
4. We will work to promote and support your activities through other political and community leaders, when and where appropriate, with whom we have strong connections.
5. We will actively court and encourage other college and university presidents to join this effort and become signatories to this commitment.

**TECHNOLOGY**

6. We will provide support and direct the appropriate staff to provide a more meaningful opportunity for students to complete an online voter registration form upon class registration.
7. We will direct the appropriate staff to work with the University's office to work on assessing the feasibility of integrating online voter registration opportunities into the online class registration and enrollment process at the most opportune times.
8. We will direct the appropriate staff to work with the University's office to develop a plan and assess the feasibility of developing a pre-populated online voter registration form that provides as much information as practicable.

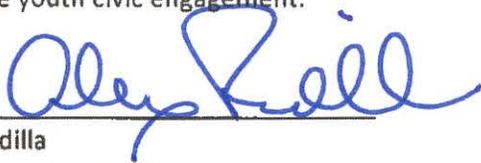
**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

9. We will provide and guide conversations on sample policies that can be adopted by your University to allow access for student organizations seeking to offer direct, nonpartisan, peer-to-peer voter registration opportunities, civic engagement opportunities, and get out the vote efforts across campus.
10. We will assist your University, either directly or through connections to nonpartisan civic organizations, in the dissemination of voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote communications by providing guidance, information, and/or other print or digital materials.

The Parties recognize the vital role we must play in supporting youth civic engagement. We believe that, acting together, we can equip students for a lifetime of civic participation. By supporting voter education, voter registration and voter turnout efforts on campus we will both better serve the students of this state and play an active role in creating a vibrant civil society and functioning democracy in America and around the world.

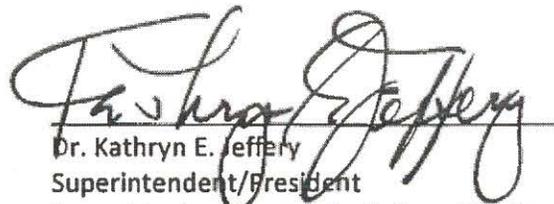
We, the undersigned, are deeply committed to expanding access and opportunity for democratic engagement to youth attending institutions of higher education. In recognition of this mutual commitment, we do hereby enter into this Memorandum of Understanding and commit our organizations to taking these essential steps to increase youth civic engagement.

Signed,



Alex Padilla  
Secretary of State

Date:



Dr. Kathryn E. Jeffery  
Superintendent/President  
Santa Monica Community College District

Date: