

FRESNO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FRESNO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**Instruction**
CIVIC EDUCATION

The County Superintendent and County Board recognize that involvement in civic and political institutions is essential to a democratic government and desires to provide a comprehensive civic education program to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and principles essential for informed, engaged, and responsible citizenship.

The County Board shall approve, upon the recommendation of the County Superintendent or designee, academic standards and curriculum in civics and government that are aligned with state academic standards and curriculum frameworks.

The County Superintendent or designee shall determine specific courses within the K-12 curriculum in which civic education and government may be explicitly and systematically taught. He/she shall also encourage the integration of civic education into other subjects as appropriate.

The County Superintendent's civic education program shall provide students with an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in American democracy and the workings of federal, state, and local governments. As appropriate, instruction should include an examination of fundamental American documents, including, but not limited to, the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and other significant writings and speeches. Instruction should also promote a student's understanding of shared democratic principles and values, such as personal responsibility, justice, equality, respect for others, civic-mindedness, and patriotism, and enable students to make their own commitment to these civic values.

Service learning, extracurricular and cocurricular activities, class and school elections, simulations of government, student-led debates, voter education, and observation of local government processes may be used to reinforce classroom instruction by linking civic knowledge to practical experience and encouraging civic involvement.

Whenever civic education includes topics that may be controversial due to political beliefs or other influences, instruction shall be presented in a balanced manner that does not promote any particular viewpoint. Students shall not be discriminated against for expressing their ideas and opinions and shall be encouraged to respect different points of view.

Constitution/Citizenship Day

Each year on or near September 17, in commemoration of Constitution and Citizenship Day, the County Superintendent may hold an educational program for students in grades K-12 pertaining to the United States Constitution which shall include exercises and instruction in the purpose, meaning, and importance of the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights. (Education Code 37221; 36 USC 106 Note)

Student Voter Registration

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To encourage students to participate in the elections process when they are of voting age, the County Superintendent or designee may provide high school students with voter registration information, including information regarding the state's online voter registration system.

The County Superintendent or designee may identify an employee at each high school whom the California Secretary of State may contact to facilitate the distribution of voter registration forms to eligible students. The County Superintendent or designee may provide the business address, phone number, and email address of each contact person to the Secretary of State. (Elections Code 2148)

The designated employee may determine the most effective means of distributing voter registration forms provided by the Secretary of State, which may include, but are not limited to, distributing the forms at the start of the school year with orientation materials, placing voter registration forms at central locations, including voter registration forms with graduation materials, and/or providing links and the web site address of the Secretary of State's online voter registration system on the County Superintendent's web site and in email notices sent to students.

The lead site administrator or designee may appoint one or more students enrolled at each high school to serve as voter outreach coordinators at that school. The voter outreach coordinator(s) may coordinate voter registration activities at the school to encourage eligible persons to register to vote. With the approval of the lead site administrator or designee, the voter outreach coordinator(s) may also coordinate election-related activities on campus, including voter registration drives, mock elections, debates, and other election-related student outreach activities. (Education Code 49041)

During the last two full weeks in April and September, in areas on each high school campus that are reasonably accessible to all students as designated by the lead site administrator or designee, the county elections official shall be allowed to register students and school personnel to vote. (Education Code 49040)

Adopted: 10/20/2011

Amended: 11/19/2020

Legal ReferenceEducation Code

54 Student service on boards and commissions

233.5 Teaching of principles

33540 Standards for government and civics instruction

37221 Commemorative exercises including anniversary of U.S. Constitution

48205 Absence from school for jury duty or precinct board service

49040-49041 Student voter registration

51210 Courses of study, grades 1-6

51220 Courses of study, grades 7-12

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51470-51474 State Seal of Civic Engagement

Elections Codes

2146 Student voter registration

2148 Student voter registration, contact person

12302 Precinct boards, appointment of students

United States Codes, Title 20

6711-6716 Education for Democracy Act

United States Code, Title 36

101-144 Patriotic observances

Management Resources

American Bar Association Publications

Essentials of Law-Related Education, rev. 2003

California Department of Education Publications

History-Social Science Content Standards

History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools

Center for Civic Education Publications

Education for Democracy: California Civic Education Scope & Sequence, 2003

National Standards for Civics and Government, 1994

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Publications

Civics Assessment

Websites

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

American Bar Association: http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education.html

American Political Science Association: <http://www.apsanet.org>

Bill of Rights Institute: <http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org>

California Association of Student Leaders: <http://www.casl1.org>

California Council for the Social Studies: <http://www.ccss.org>

California Secretary of State Online Voter Registration: <http://registertovote.ca.gov>

Center for California Studies: <http://www.csus.edu/calst>

Center for Civic Education: <http://www.civiced.org>

Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement:

<http://www.civicyouth.org>

Constitutional Rights Foundation: <http://www.crf-usa.org>

National Assessment of Educational Progress, Civics Assessment:

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/civics>

National Council for the Social Studies: <http://www.ncss.org>