



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE ALEX PADILLA

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CONTACT: Sam Mahood

(916) 653-6575

Secretary Padilla Announces Partnership with the Largest Postsecondary Education System in Nation, California Community Colleges, to Register Students to Vote

SACRAMENTO – California Secretary of State Alex Padilla today announced a partnership between the Secretary of State's office and the California Community Colleges (CCC) system via a campus-wide resolution. The resolution, passed by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors today, encourages all 72 districts and 113 colleges that constitute the system of the California Community Colleges to participate in the *California Students Vote Project*.

"I am proud of the momentum building across the state at our postsecondary institutions around student voter registration," said Secretary of State Alex Padilla. "This effort has been a long time in the making and is an exciting first step, but the real work is about to begin. I look forward to working with each California community college campus to ensure best practices are adopted, they receive the support they need from my office, and together, we finally close the voting gap."

The resolution passed today, highlights the current state of student voter registration efforts and encourages all campuses within the California Community Colleges to adopt a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Secretary of State's office.

To view the resolution passed by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, visit: <http://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdfs/castudentvote/ccr-resolution.pdf>

The MOU encourages campuses to implement best practices as outlined by *The California Student Vote Project** which include: asking students during optimal time periods or via their student portals to register to vote, sending all-campus emails and notifications about the importance of voting before voter registration deadlines and elections, and implementing said practices for on-the-ground voter registration efforts.

"An informed and engaged electorate is vital to holding our institutions accountable and improving the wellbeing of our state and our nation," said Geoffrey L. Baum, president of the Board of Governors. "Community colleges can play a vital role in educating students who go on to keep our economy and democracy strong. We are pleased to join this nonpartisan effort to increase voter registration and civic participation among our 2.1 million students."

At its last meeting which was held on September 6, 2016, the [Santa Monica Community College Board of Trustees](#) approved the MOU.

“The Santa Monica College Board of Trustees was absolutely unanimous in their support of this MOU because we strongly believe that our students have the power to preserve our nation’s democracy, as well as to bring about effective change in the global arena. We hope to adequately inform our students, so that they understand the enormous responsibility and privilege that is theirs when they choose to vote,” said Kathryn E. Jeffery, Superintendent/President, Santa Monica College.

As part of the MOU, the Santa Monica Community College has committed to implementing a pilot for software that prepopulates online voter registration forms with as much campus-held student information as practical.

To view the signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Santa Monica Community College District, visit: <http://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdfs/castudentsvote/mou-santa-monica.pdf>

As outlined in the MOU, The Secretary of State’s office created a webpage which hosts resources for campuses, faculty and students for frequently asked questions related to voting, sample posters, sample social media posts for voter registration efforts, key deadlines and dates, and a guide to facilitate voter registration drives.

To visit the *California Students Vote Project* page, click here: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/castudentsvote>

**The California Students Vote Project* is a public-private effort led by the California Secretary of State’s office in partnership with the California Lieutenant Governor’s office, and three nonprofit organizations; CalPIRG, California Common Cause, and Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian Law Caucus. These groups recognize that a healthy democracy must include the voices of California’s next generation. *The California Students Vote Project* is advocating for the implementation of student voter registration best practices at all of California’s public colleges and universities.

In the 2014 General Election, only 52% of eligible youth were registered to vote, which was more than 20 points below any other age group, and only 8% of eligible youth aged 18-24 voted. A report released by the Secretary of State’s office in 2014 stated that only 8,454 of the 2.8 million students at California’s public colleges and universities registered to vote through an online opportunity provided by their campus, which is a mere 0.3 percent of the student body.

The California Students Vote Project proposes has the potential to dramatically increase voter engagement in upcoming elections.

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