



DEBRA BOWEN | SECRETARY OF STATE | STATE OF CALIFORNIA
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January 1, 2009

Mr. Gregory Schmidt
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

E. Dotson Wilson
Chief Clerk of the Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Gentlemen:

Attached please find the Secretary of State's report on student voter registration efforts carried out over the past calendar year, which is required by California Elections Code section 2146(d). I hope you will find the report informative and helpful in understanding the progress to date on student voter registration efforts, as well as the upcoming challenges. If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact me at (916) 653-7244.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debra Bowen".

Debra Bowen
Secretary of State

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Annual Report to the Legislature on Student Voter Registration

California Elections Code section 2146(d) requires the Secretary of State to submit an annual report to the Legislature regarding the Student Voter Registration Act of 2003. The Secretary of State has administrative duties concerning the provision of voter registration materials. The law requires that voter registration be maintained at the highest possible level; that every high school and college student receives a voter registration form with their diploma; and, that every school do all in its power to ensure students are given the opportunity to register to vote.

SB 854, Chapter 481, Statutes of 2007, amended Elections Code section 2146 to require a community college or CSU campus that operates an automated class registration system to, in coordination with the Secretary of State, permit students during the class registration process to receive a voter registration form that is preprinted with personal information relevant to voter registration. This requirement is to be implemented by January 1, 2010. Any community college or CSU campus that does not have an automated class registration system in place as of January 1, 2008, is required to establish a system to permit students to receive a preprinted voter registration form during the class registration process within two years of implementing an automated class registration system.

For a number of years, California Elections Code section 2146 has required the Secretary of State to provide every high school, community college, CSU and UC campus with voter registration forms. The number of voter registration forms shall be consistent with the number of students enrolled at each school who are of voting age or will be of voting age by the end of the year. In 2008, the Secretary of State printed over 2.5 million student voter registration forms with an identifier for tracking purposes and distributed these student voter registration forms to the high school and college campuses at the cost of approximately \$209,000. Only 16,489 of the 2.5 million student voter registration forms printed and distributed were returned to the Secretary of State. Given this return rate of 0.66%, the average cost of a returned student voter registration form was \$12.68.

While not required by law, the Secretary of State and the Community College of San Francisco (CCSF) entered into a voluntary partnership in 2003 that allows students to request a voter registration form during the automated class registration process personalized with information from their class registration application. Since 2003, 30 other community colleges have partnered with CCSF to use its automated class registration system structure, resulting in over 200,000 students being provided with personalized preprinted voter registration forms. In 2008, the estimated cost to print and distribute over 51,700 personalized preprinted voter registration forms was almost \$85,000, which equates to an average of \$1.64 per personalized preprinted voter registration form.

Attachment A reflects the number of student voter registration forms mailed to high schools, community colleges, and CSU and UC campuses, the number of student voter

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registration forms provided to campuses that were returned to the Secretary of State, and the number of voter registration forms provided to students through an automated program.

The cost to print and mail both the student voter registration forms and the personalized preprinted voter registration forms was approximately \$294,000. The automated system going into place in early 2009 to comply with SB 854 and replace the system used by CCSF and other community colleges will substantially reduce the \$85,000 annual cost of the registration program. Given the high cost and low success rate of this program and the alternative registration avenues now available to students that were not available when this requirement was enacted, the Legislature may wish to consider eliminating the mailing requirements in California Elections Code section 2146.

2008 STUDENT VOTER REGISTRATION

	Number of Student Voter Registration Forms Provided to Campuses
High Schools	300,645
Community Colleges	1,607,000
CSU campuses	399,000
UC campuses	163,000
Private Universities ¹	42,000
Total Number of Student Voter Registration Forms Distributed	2,511,645

Total Number of Student Voter Registration Forms Returned to the Secretary of State	16,489 (0.66%)
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AUTOMATED PERSONALIZED PREPRINTED VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS

Total Number of Voter Registration Forms Provided to Students through an Automated Class Registration System²	51,743
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¹ While not statutorily required, student voter registration forms were also provided to private universities in the spirit of the Student Voter Registration Act of 2003 to further student voter registration efforts.

² Automated voter registration is not statutorily required until January 1, 2010; however a pilot program that provides this option to students at 30 community colleges has been in place since 2003.