



ALEX PADILLA | SECRETARY OF STATE | STATE OF CALIFORNIA
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December 30, 2015

Mr. Daniel Alvarez
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 3044
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mr. E. Dotson Wilson
Chief Clerk of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 3196
Sacramento, CA 95814

VIA EMAIL AND HAND DELIVERY

Dear Mr. Alvarez and Mr. Wilson:

Attached is my office's report on student voter registration efforts carried out over the past calendar year, which is required by California Elections Code section 2146(d). If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact me at (916) 653-7244.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Padilla".

ALEX PADILLA
California Secretary of State

Attachment

cc: Ms. Diane Boyer-Vine
Legislative Counsel

December 30, 2015
Secretary of State
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 on student voter registration efforts the office has undertaken pursuant to the Student Voter Registration Act of 2003. It is the Legislature's intent that every eligible high school and college student receives a meaningful opportunity to apply to register to vote and that every school does all in its power to ensure students are provided the opportunity to apply to register to vote.

BACKGROUND

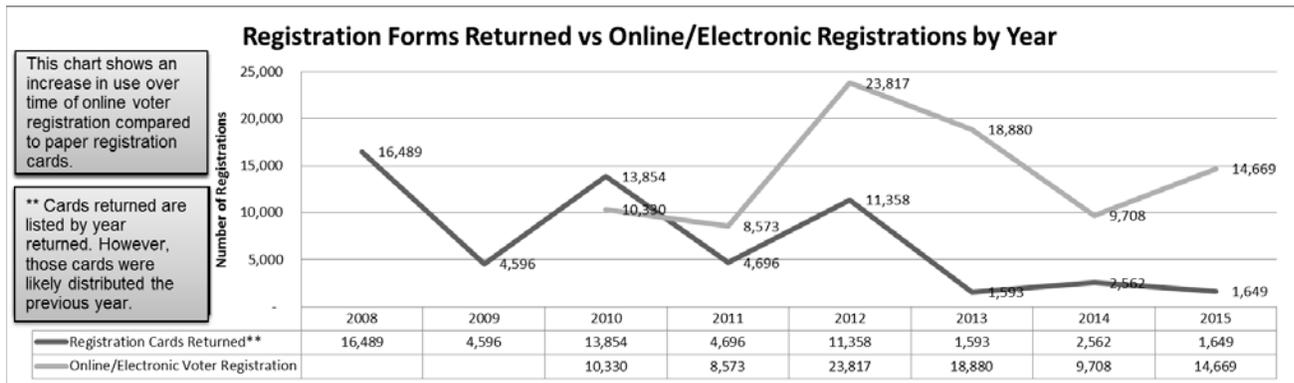
Section 2146 requires every California Community College (CCC) and California State University (CSU) campus that operates an automated class registration system to, in coordination with the Secretary of State, permit students during the class registration process to apply to register to vote online. Under the law, the University of California (UC) is additionally encouraged to provide the same opportunity to register to vote online during the class registration process. In 2012, the Secretary of State's office launched California's online voter registration application at RegisterToVote.ca.gov which allows schools to provide an opportunity to submit an affidavit of voter registration electronically in compliance with this section.

Section 2146 also requires the Secretary of State to provide every high school, CCC, CSU, and UC campus with voter registration applications. From the enactment of Section 2146 under the Student Voter Registration Act of 2003 (Chapter 819, Statutes of 2003), the Secretary of State was required to send to schools printed voter registration cards based solely on the number of voting age students enrolled. This approach was not very efficient or effective. In 2008 alone, the Secretary of State's office printed and mailed over 2.5 million student voter registration applications to high school and college campuses which only yielded 16,489, or 0.66%, completed registration applications.

With the passage of Senate Bill 854 (Chapter 481, Statutes of 2007), the requirement to provide printed registration cards for each student was reduced for campuses that had adopted a system of prefilling registration forms with student information. In 2014, the Legislature passed Assembly Bill 1446 (Chapter 593, Statutes of 2014), and now registration cards are only sent in numbers specifically requested by the campuses, encouraging students to register via the online system.

The online voter registration system has yielded far more effective results at a far more reasonable cost than the previous paper-only implementation. Efforts in 2012 resulted in 23,817 online registrations by students. Combined with the 11,358 paper registrations from the same period, the Student Voter Registration efforts produced over double the number of registrations at a fraction of the cost when compared to 2008.

Chart 1 – Student Voter Registration Efforts by Year



In addition, with the implementation of California’s online voter registration application, more and more people are choosing to register to vote online. With this in mind, the Secretary of State encourages high schools to provide a link on their school website, and within parent/student newsletters or other materials, to the Secretary of State’s online voter registration application at RegisterToVote.ca.gov. The linked website is virtually identical to the site created for the CCC, CSU, and UC campuses under Section 2146, providing high school students and staff with the ability to complete voter registration applications online.

2015 RESULTS

Each year, the Secretary of State contacts each high school, CCC campus, CSU campus, and UC campus in California to assess their voter registration needs. In 2015, of the 286 responses from high schools, 232 requested voter registration applications. Of the 55 responses at the college level, 13 CCC and 1 UC campus requested voter registration applications. A total of 55,357 registration forms were distributed, and 1,649 were returned (these returned forms were likely distributed in the previous year). In the same period, 14,669 students registered to vote using the electronic system.

The cost of mailing the student voter registration applications to high schools and college campuses in 2015 was approximately \$1,304.00. The cost for return postage of the voter registration applications was \$751.68.

Attachment A reflects voter registration data for 2015 pursuant to the Student Voter Registration Act of 2003 and compares that data from similar reports provided for 2014 and 2013.

2015 STUDENT VOTER REGISTRATION

Figure 1: The number of students who have completed a voter registration application online under the program CCC, CSU, and UC campuses adopted to comply with EC section 2146 in 2015 compared to the number of registration applications completed in 2014 and 2013.

	Completed Online Voter Registration Applications Under EC 2146 – 2015	Completed Online Voter Registration Applications Under EC 2146 – 2014	Completed Online Voter Registration Applications Under EC 2146 – 2013
California Community College	6,644	4,010	6,336
California State University	5,113	3,041	4,097
University of California	1,709	1,227	3,542
No school identified ¹	1,203	1,430	4,905
Total Number of Students	14,669	9,708	18,880

Figure 2: The number of student voter registration paper applications mailed to high schools, CCC, CSU, and UC campuses and the number of paper student voter registration applications that were returned to the Secretary of State in 2015 compared to the number of paper registration applications completed in 2014 and 2013.

	Number of Student Voter Registration Applications Requested – 2015	Number of Student Voter Registration Applications Requested – 2014	Number of Student Voter Registration Applications Requested – 2013
High School Campuses ²	31,832	16,148	24,197
CCC Campuses	23,425	10,350	15,390
CSU Campuses	0	250	40
UC Campuses	100	0	2,000
Total Number of Student Voter Registration Forms Distributed	55,357	26,748	41,627
Total Number of Student Voter Registration Forms Returned to the Secretary of State³	1,649	2,562	1,593

¹ Students are not required to enter school identifying information as part of the voter registration application process.

² Additionally, 167 high schools reported that they offered the Secretary of State's online voter registration application to students and staff by placing the link RegisterToVote.ca.gov on the school's website.

³ The student voter registration application distribution process is completed during the fall of each year. Therefore, the number of applications returned each year is most likely a result of the previous year's mailing.