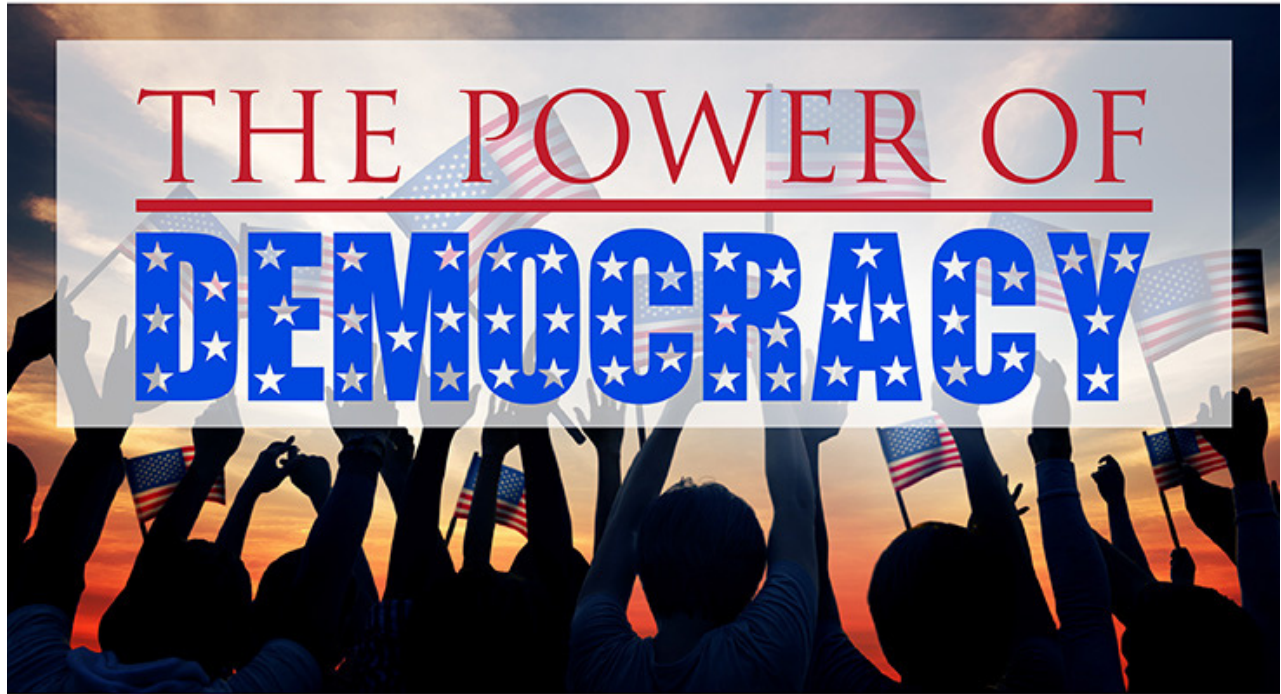


LEADING IN PARTNERSHIP



BY FOSTERING COMMUNITY

2022 - 2024

Through the lens of equity, inclusion, diversity, and partnership, the Santa Clara County Office of Education's (SCCOE) *Power of Democracy (POD) Initiative* will:

- (1) Foster an understanding of our democracy's structures and processes by sharing resources and best practices, and encouraging informed civic participation that engages districts and communities.
- (2) Partner with districts and communities to provide access to high-quality civic education through programs, activities, and resources that encourage student civic engagement and civil discourse.
- (3) Support the principles of liberty, civility, equity, inclusion, individual responsibility, diversity, partnership, and justice.
- (4) Support effective and evidenced-based practices to engage authentic youth voice and prepare students to be active in the democratic process.

civics.sccoe.org

About Santa Clara County Voter Participation

The November 3, 2020 Presidential Election was Santa Clara County's highest ever turnout election and had record-high voter registration. Out of 1,019,309 registered voters, a total of 863,964 cast valid ballots, for a voter turnout rate of 84.52%. Youth-eligible voter turnout was 63% in Silicon Valley (Santa Clara & San Mateo Counties), the lowest for all age groups, but a 20% increase since 2016. Voter turnout for 18 - 24 year olds was 77% in 2020 Presidential Election compared to 49% in 2018.

Youth voter registration and pre-registration remain a key focus during youth voter registration weeks in California. Voter registration for 17.5 - 25 year olds is 131,084 as of May 2022. Additionally, Santa Clara County has the 6th largest number of 16 - 17 years olds pre-registered to vote in the state, with a total of 7,635 as of September 2022. That is the highest number of pre-registered youth out of all nine Bay Area counties. In total, 128,944 teens in California pre-registered to vote. Pre-register to vote at: <https://registertovote.ca.gov>.

About the Power of Democracy's Strategic Plan

In May 2017, the Santa Clara County Office of Education developed a vision and policy framework necessary to increase civic education, youth voice, and engagement opportunities in Santa Clara County. The plan for civic education is centered on research-based practices.

POD Initiative Definitions: Civics is defined as "the study and practice of negotiating values in order to determine how to live productively and compassionately in relation with each other" (Mirra & Godina Garcia, 2023).

Strategic Area of Emphasis #1

Expand access to inclusive, equitable, and high-quality opportunities for civic education, engagement, and leadership to ensure students representing the rich diversity of our county have access and are able to participate meaningfully.

Inclusive, equitable, and high-quality civic education requires knowledge of history, principles, and foundations of American democracy. It requires the ability to

participate in civic and democratic processes. Therefore, content, inquiry, and literacy must be a part of a standardized education, with instruction designed to meet the needs of all students to develop youth voice. Students need to engage in discipline-specific literacy skills, learn to effectively answer and formulate questions about the past and the present, and learn to contribute appropriately to public processes and discussions of real issues.

Strategy

Provide resources and share opportunities with students to support earning the California State Seal of Civic Engagement.

Support districts to develop Ethnic Studies programs to meet the graduation requirement, as such a course increases youth civic engagement and community responsiveness.

Promote/coordinate civic engagement events for students at all grade levels and abilities throughout Santa Clara County such as Mock Trial, Day of Racial Healing, Constitution Day, Law Day, social justice murals, participating in the voting process, and others.

Recognize and celebrate excellence of educational leaders who provide meaningful civic participation opportunities for all students.

Strategic Area of Emphasis #2

Partner with educational leaders to promote inclusive, equitable, and high-quality civic education, engagement, and student leadership opportunities to build their capacity to empower meaningful, student selected issues and take action.

Strong partnerships, communication, and trust are at the center of providing quality support to meet educational leader's civic

education and engagement goals. Actions include meeting with partners to discuss the value and importance of civic education and engagement. POD encourages educational leaders to apply for the California Civic Learning Award and the California State Seal of Civic Engagement. Lastly, POD will continue to provide non-partisan, specific civic learning educational resources, and expand professional learning opportunities.

Strategy

Provide resources, effective models, board policies, and educator recognition for implementation of the California State Seal of Civic Engagement.

Provide district leadership with support for the integration of civics and civic action into the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

Expand professional development opportunities for educators to implement best practices and curriculum that can be applied at all levels and subject areas of learning.

Maintain ongoing communication with the entire school community to create a network that shares knowledge, strategies, and resources to inspire civic learning.

Strategic Area of Emphasis #3

Partner with parents, community members, community-based organizations, government agencies, and the public to raise awareness and expand opportunities for students to have a meaningful voice.

POD has a strong foundation of partnerships,

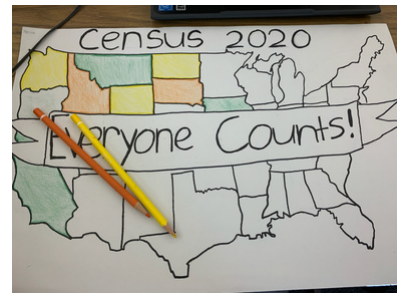
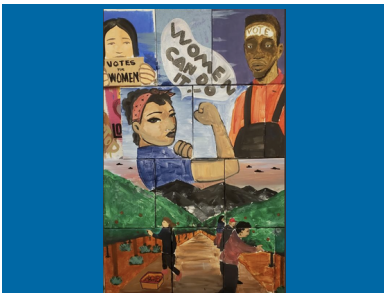
but to reach all youth, expanded participation is needed. Broad-based membership will fill in the gaps and ensure that the partnerships reflect the diversity of the community served. POD will work to reach all corners of the county to build balanced partnerships.

Strategy

Conduct workshops and outreach to expand partnerships with parents, community members, community-based organizations, and other partners that enhance and elevate POD and support students earning the State Seal of Civic Engagement.

Explore ways to minimize barriers to create and maintain partnerships with educational leaders.

Explore effective and equitable educational systems that model and create a sense of belonging.



Special recognition and thanks to the Power of Democracy Initiative Steering Committee for their input and contributions in developing this strategic plan.

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