

**RESOLUTION
ENCOURAGING SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTICIPATION
IN CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL VOTER EDUCATION WEEKS**

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION No. 2241-1**

WHEREAS, the last two weeks in April are designated as High School Voter Education Weeks to provide an opportunity for California high school students to become engaged participants in our democracy;

WHEREAS, Secretary of State, Alex Padilla and State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Thurmond are committed to strengthening and motivating students to take an active role in civic processes;

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) has partnered with government agencies, schools, and community-based organizations to increase civic education and engagement through an initiative called "[The Power of Democracy](https://communications325.wixsite.com/santaclarademocracy)" (<https://communications325.wixsite.com/santaclarademocracy>) an initiative committed to strengthening civic engagement within the County;

WHEREAS, SCCOE is committed to serving, inspiring, and promoting student and public school success by providing quality support to districts, schools, students, and communities by expanding, strengthening, and leveraging partnerships with community-based organizations, funders, agencies, and other partners;

WHEREAS, the goal of the Civic Engagement Initiative is to increase civic literacy and involvement, by working in the classrooms, with parents and families, and building partnerships with key stakeholders to communicate the importance of Civic Engagement;

WHEREAS, studies have proven that two of the best ways to engage young voters is to provide opportunities to have high-quality civic conversations in the classroom and service learning projects that can affect change on local levels will inspire students to take future action;

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Office of Education supports local districts, by creating a non-partisan [online toolkit](https://communications325.wixsite.com/santaclarademocracy/post/toolkit-high-school-voters-education-weeks) (<https://communications325.wixsite.com/santaclarademocracy/post/toolkit-high-school-voters-education-weeks>) for educators, including information on the importance of voting, how to pick a political party, pre-registration links, resources for fostering civil discourse, and more;

WHEREAS, to support the Civic Engagement Initiative, the Santa Clara County Office of Education partnered with the Registrar of Voters, and Supervisor Cindy Chavez to participate

in a pilot voter registration drive. Last fall, SCCOE staff visited 13 high schools in San Jose to pre-register and register students to vote. Seven hundred and eighty-seven students registered during their lunch break;

WHEREAS, SCCOE and Opportunity Youth Partnership launched a pilot voter education campaign driven by professional development for teachers and videos targeting young adults to increase voter turnout. The #IVoted pilot program fosters nonpartisan civic engagement of opportunity youth in Santa Clara County. In conjunction with the program, SCCOE has released a series of Public Service Announcements entitled '#IVoted' a four-part series designed to engage student populations underrepresented at the voting polls;

WHEREAS, SCCOE in partnership through the [Power of Democracy Civic Engagement Initiative](https://communications325.wixsite.com/santaclarademocracy) (<https://communications325.wixsite.com/santaclarademocracy>) is working to raise awareness and expand civic engagement opportunities. Through this initiative we offer supports for educators including hosting an upcoming [Civic Engagement Expo](https://communications325.wixsite.com/santaclarademocracy/post/civic-engagement-expo) (<https://communications325.wixsite.com/santaclarademocracy/post/civic-engagement-expo>) to highlight the work happening in Santa Clara and our neighboring counties within Region 5;

WHEREAS, for the November 6, 2018 Mid-Term Election, out of 885,764 registered voters in Santa Clara County, a total of 625,462 valid ballots were cast. A voter turnout rate of 70.61-percent. While this number is lower than the previous November 2016 Presidential Election, we know that midterm elections have a historically lower turnout. While neither Santa Clara County nor the State of California published a post-election report by voter age, Circle- The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning And Engagement has reported that across the nation, young voters have voted in record numbers at 31-percent of eligible voters participating in the November 2018 election. This is the highest level of participation in the past 25 years;

WHEREAS, young people can play a vital role in our democracy by voicing their opinions and helping make decisions through the electoral process;

WHEREAS, the California State Voter Registration deadline is February 17, 2020, to participate in the March 3rd Presidential primary election;

WHEREAS, to vote in California elections, citizens must be registered to vote 15 days before the election takes place;

WHEREAS, eligible 16- and 17-year-olds can now pre-register to vote online or by paper. California youth who pre-register to vote will have their registration become active once they turn 18 years old. There are 82,821 students in public high schools in Santa Clara County, and the 14- to 17-year-old population is 78,186;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Santa Clara County Board of Education and County Superintendent of Schools do hereby adopt this resolution to encourage Santa Clara County Schools to participate in California High School Voter Education Weeks.

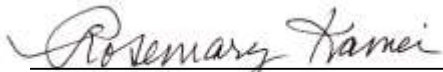
PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Santa Clara County Board of Education at a meeting held on April 17, 2019, by the following vote:

AYES: President Kamei, Vice President Song, trustees Di Salvo, King, Mah, Ortiz and Rossi

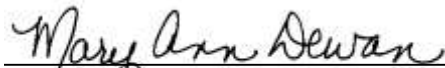
NOES: none

ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: none



Rosemary Kamei, President
Santa Clara County Board of Education



Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.
County Superintendent of Schools