

Welcome

Thank you for leading the Student Vote program in your school and being a champion of democratic engagement for your students and community. Educators play a vital role in building future citizens and, we believe, preparing students for the voting process should start at an early age.

Student Vote Canada 2019 turns the federal election into an authentic learning opportunity and helps foster the development of 21st century competencies. Rather than learn about civics and citizenship from a textbook, students experience it firsthand with relevant events and issues in real time. The model is an exercise in deeper learning, exploration and connectedness, and in allowing students to practice the habits of active and engaged citizenship.

Student Vote teaches students that the role of a citizen is a critical one if our democracy is to thrive and succeed. The publication of the Student Vote results allows students to feel that their voice matters and helps them understand that they are part of something larger than their school.

Participant Outcomes

The Student Vote program aims to achieve the following student outcomes:

- Improved understanding and awareness of government and the electoral process;
- Enhanced sense of civic duty and social responsibility;
- Increased political conversation with friends and family;
- Heightened awareness and interest in politics; and,
- Improved critical thinking and media literacy skills.

An independent evaluation commissioned by Elections Canada in 2015 found that participating in Student Vote had a positive impact on student knowledge and understanding of Canadian politics and elections, on their interest and confidence in discussing politics and on future voting intentions. Furthermore, the program provides families with more opportunities to learn about elections and politics. Among parents and guardians of participating students, 28 per cent said that their child's participation in Student Vote positively influenced their own decision to vote.

Digital Literacy and News Consumption Habits

One of the most significant threats facing democracies today is the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation online, especially at election time. Citizens must navigate an information ecosystem where it is increasingly challenging to separate fact from fiction and to recognize credible information.

Developing effective information literacy skills has the potential to make a real and lasting impact on the next generation's ability to contextualize and assess news and information from any source.

We believe these information literacy habits are essential for citizenship, and encourage you to use these materials as a starting point for the Student Vote program in your classroom, before you explore the parties, candidates and election coverage.

Special Considerations

- Be sensitive to issues at home that may challenge perspectives around voting, such as religious reasons or traditions followed by certain groups. Be mindful that there are barriers to democratic participation by certain groups due to language, class and negative historical experiences. Voting may not be the end goal for all people, but we can still strive towards greater engagement in the community.
- Encourage a safe space for discussion. Recognize and acknowledge that people have different opinions and biases.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT OR QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact us at 1-866-488-8775 or by email at hello@civix.ca.

Please be sure to visit the project website for videos, slide decks and additional tools: studentvote.ca/canada