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Introduction

This manual is intended to help guide you through Student Vote Day. On the following pages you will find suggestions on how to operate the parallel election within your school and guidelines for reporting your results.

There are several methods for running Student Vote Day at your school, but in all instances, full school participation is strongly recommended. By practicing now, students will be more inclined and prepared to participate in our democracy in the future.

Here is a quick list of items you will need for Student Vote Day:

- Ballot boxes**
- Voting screens**
- Seals (for securing ballot boxes)**
- Ballots**
- Statement of the Poll (Reporting form)**

The ballot boxes, seals and voting screens are provided in your first package and the ballots and Statement of the Poll are provided in your second package.

National Student Vote Week

National Student Vote Week will take place between Tuesday, October 13 and Friday, October 16. Results must be reported by 6pm local time on October 16. (Please refer to the *Confidentiality Note* on page 12).

Adhering to the reporting deadline is necessary in order for CIVIX to have enough time to receive and verify the results, and distribute them to media for release on election night.

Schools that report their results after the deadline will NOT be included in media reports, but they will be included in the final tallies shared the day after the general election.

Voting Methods

The following voting methods have been designed to assist in the organization of your vote. You may choose to use one or more of these suggestions or develop another method that works for your school.

Method A: VOTE BY CLASSROOM (stationary voting scenario)

Teachers take their classes to the polling station at pre-set times throughout the day. An arrangement in which classes are called down by class or grade is suggested to help ensure that students do not have the opportunity to vote more than once. When students arrive at the polling station, designated election officials instruct them on where to line up in order to cast a ballot. This method of voting allows for an authentic experience of visiting a polling station. Consider offering additional voting booths in order to process the number of students in the time allotted; alternatively, consider arranging for classes to vote over a number of days to ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate.

Method B: VOTING ON OWN TIME (stationary voting scenario)

The polling station is open all day long, and students are only able to vote on their own time. When students arrive at the polling station, designated election officials tell them where to line up in order to cast a ballot. While it is the most authentic, this method of voting often leads to a lower voter turnout and floods of voters in short periods of time, such as between classes and during lunch. Consider offering more voting booths in order to be prepared for high voter traffic.

Method C: HOMEROOM VOTING (in-class voting scenario)

Before the school day begins, distribute ballots to all participating teachers and classrooms. At the beginning of homeroom class, each teacher hands out the ballots to students in her or his class. Students vote immediately in class and the teacher collects the ballots shortly thereafter. Designated Poll Clerks collect the ballots from each class before the end of the period, using either a ballot box or envelope. All ballot boxes and/or envelopes are then taken immediately to a secure room, where the ballots can be counted immediately or later in the day. This method makes voting very quick and easy, as it is completed in minutes at the start of the day; however, students who are voting do not get the authentic experience of visiting a polling station. Consider providing an alternative voting option for students who do not have homeroom at the beginning of the day.

Method D: MOBILE POLLING STATION (in-class voting scenario)

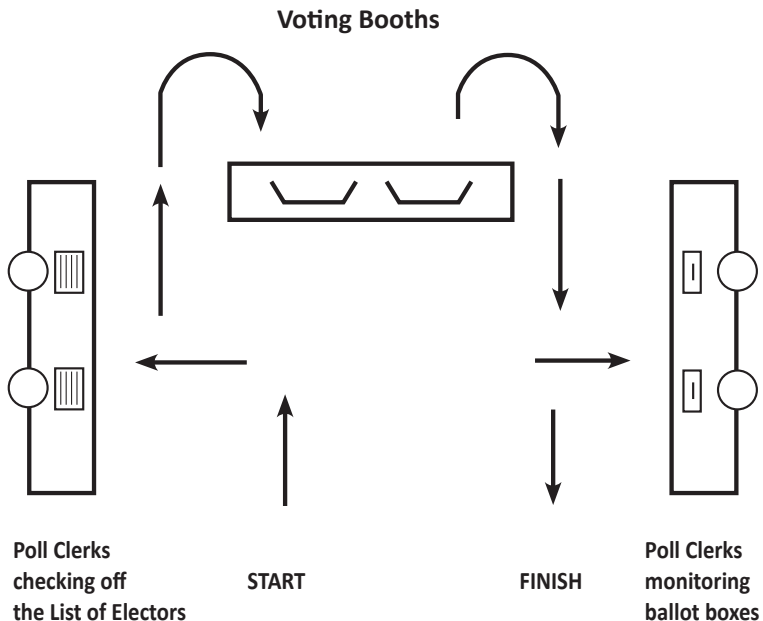
During the first period of the day, designated election officials take polling stations from classroom to classroom. Generally, this method works well with three officials per group: one Deputy Returning Officer and two Poll Clerks. When every class has had an opportunity to vote, all ballot boxes are taken to a secure room, where the ballots can be counted immediately or later in the day. This method of voting eliminates long lines, delays and the disruption caused by moving an entire class to a new location. Plan ahead so that there are enough voting booths for all students to participate within one period of the day and allow approximately 15 minutes for the mobile polling station to visit each classroom.

Layout of the Polling Station

If your school chooses to utilize a stationary polling station, we recommend that you select a spacious, accessible, visible location such as a library, empty classroom, gym or the cafeteria. Make sure the location is well known and students are informed of the location prior to Student Vote Day. Where circumstances permit, we suggest the following area layout to process a maximum number of students quickly for optimum efficiency.

- Set up desks or tables in a 'U' shape around the perimeter.
- Seat the Poll Clerks along one side to process voters and distribute ballots as they enter.
- Voting booths are situated on the next bank of desks/tables. Voters go behind the voting screen or desk and mark their ballot.
- Once they have voted, students take their ballot to the tables/desks lining the third side, where other Poll Clerks sit with the ballot boxes.

Note: The entrance should be along the fourth "empty" side, where there are no tables, to allow easy access and queuing without disrupting the flow of students between tables.



Suggested Guidelines

Roles of Designated Election Officials

Many schools have students take on the roles of election officials so that they have a greater experience of the democratic system. The following roles are suggested:

- **Deputy Returning Officers** (DROs) are the officials responsible for conducting the student election and counting the votes. They are the only election officials allowed to handle the ballots during the counting process.
- **Poll Clerks** are the individuals who staff the polling station. They are responsible for checking ID (optional), crossing voters off the List of Electors, distributing ballots and collecting ballots. When the voting process is complete, the Poll Clerks assist the Deputy Returning Officers by totaling the ballots counted and filling in the vote tally sheet.
- **Candidate Representatives** (Scrutineers) are generally individuals appointed by a candidate to act as an observer of the election process on polling day. In the case of the Student Vote program, the Team Leader can appoint a Candidate Representative for each party or candidate. Candidate Representatives may also be present when ballots are counted, but they may not handle the ballots in any way.
- **Student Vote Team Leader** (a teacher) is the official liaison between the school and CIVIX.

Notes for Assigning Roles

- In schools that select one of the in-class voting scenarios, consider sharing the election roles among several classes. One class might take on the role of Poll Clerks and be responsible for traveling between classes with the ballots and ballot boxes, while another class might take on the role of Deputy Returning Officers, Poll Clerks and Candidate Representatives responsible for the counting process.
- In schools utilizing one of the stationary voting scenarios, consider assigning the same group of students to be the election officials for the entire day or allowing several teams of students to alternate throughout the day. The latter approach will allow more students to be involved and have a hands-on experience with the election.
- Some schools may wish to invite parents or other members of the community to volunteer as election officials for Student Vote Day. Arrange any volunteers well in advance of Student Vote Day in order to ensure that there will be enough individuals to staff the election. School guidelines regarding visitors and/or volunteers should be followed if parents or members of the community are to be invited into the school.

Creating & Using a List of Electors

A List of Electors is recommended when using a stationary voting scenario to provide realism and to ensure that students do not vote multiple times. This list will include the names of all students registered at the school and must be compiled internally by authorized staff and the Team Leader. This list can usually be provided from the main office upon request of a staff member.

A List of Electors is also an option for *in-class voting scenarios* but is not necessary. An extra copy of the class attendance sheet is a simple way to create the List of Electors for each class.

For a more authentic experience, consider implementing an identification process similar to the one used in federal elections. High schools could use their student ID cards or students could create their own ID in the lead up to the vote. If you are creating your own ID, it is suggested that you only include the student's name and classroom. Do not include the student's home address, to ensure privacy.

As with an actual List of Electors, when a student enters the polling station and is handed a ballot, the Poll Clerk will verify the identification of the voter (optional) and cross off the name of the student to indicate that she or he has participated in the election.

Ballots

Student Vote ballots are printed and distributed after nominations close. The ballots will include the names of local candidates running in your riding. Please make sure that you have provided the correct riding information upon registering or have updated this information prior to ballot printing.

It is strongly recommended that the Team Leader or an appointed Deputy Returning Officer initial the reverse side of each ballot prior to the commencement of Student Vote Day, which will verify the official Student Vote ballots for your school.

Considerations When Choosing a Polling Station

When choosing your polling station, make sure that it is accessible to all students in the school, particularly students who may use a wheelchair or other mobility devices.

Also make sure the area is well lit, free from obstacles and roomy enough for students to move around the voting booths easily.

Student Vote Election Requirements

Regardless of the voting method you select, the following is a list of requirements for Student Vote Day.

Before You Begin

- No campaign materials are permitted in the polling station or on those who work at the polls. This is to ensure a completely impartial environment.
- If the local media wishes to do a story on your school's Student Vote Day, please follow your school board's policy regarding members of the media on school property. Consider distributing a media release form to students before Student Vote Day if you anticipate that media may visit.
- If any other member of the public comes to your school curious about Student Vote Day, deal with them in the same manner that you would with any visitor entering the school on any other day.

Sealing the Ballot Box

- Once the ballot box is folded together, the Deputy Returning Officer will show the inside of the empty box to the Poll Clerks and Candidate Representatives so that all of the election officials present can verify that the box is empty;
- Using the seals provided, the Deputy Returning Officer will secure the ballot boxes. The four short seals will be placed on the left and right edges of the ballot box, on the top and bottom. The two long seals will be placed on the front edges of the ballot box, on the top and bottom;
- The tape or seals will be initialed by the Team Leader to show that she or he has authorized the ballot box for use.

Receiving a Ballot at the Polling Station

- When a voter requests a ballot at the poll, the Poll Clerk will fold a ballot into thirds, thereby concealing the side with the candidates' names from observers;
- The Poll Clerk will verify that the ballot has been initialed by the Team Leader (or appointed DRO) and will hand the folded ballot to the voter;
- The voter will take the ballot behind a voting screen to unfold the ballot in private, mark the ballot as she or he chooses, and refold the ballot before leaving the voting booth;
- The voter will take the marked ballot to the Poll Clerk monitoring the ballot box;
- Without unfolding the ballot, the Poll Clerk will verify that the Team Leader's initials are visible on the ballot;
- The Poll Clerk will return the verified ballot to the voter, who will put the ballot in the ballot box;
- In the event that the ballot is poorly printed or a voter tears a ballot or makes a mistake on her or his ballot, the voter may return the ballot and request a new one. The first ballot will be declared a spoiled ballot, and the DRO will write "spoiled" on the back of the ballot and keep it to the side.

Counting the Ballots

- The polls will be declared closed at a predetermined and clearly advertised time, after which nobody may cast a vote;
- The Team Leader will verify that each ballot box is still sealed by the tape that she or he initialed before the polls opened and that neither the box nor the seal has been tampered with;
- The tape will be broken, and the Deputy Returning Officers and Poll Clerks will open the box in order to count the ballots.
- Candidate Representatives may be present to observe that the process is completed fairly;
- The ballots will be sorted by the DRO based on two distinct categories.

1 – Ballots NOT placed in the ballot box will be separated and counted as such:

SPOILED – A ballot that has been kept separate and never placed in the ballot box because it was mistakenly marked or torn and exchanged for a new ballot. The DRO writes “spoiled” on the back of the ballot.

2 – Ballots placed in the ballot box will be separated and counted as such:

VALID – A ballot that has been properly marked for one candidate (see page 10).

REJECTED – A ballot that has not been marked properly and declared invalid by the DRO (see page 11).

- Any questionable ballots will be left to the Team Leader to categorize according to the criteria describing a properly marked ballot;
- Ballots will not be counted again unless the Team Leader orders a recount to confirm the totals;
- Consider using a Tally Sheet to assist in the tabulation of votes (page 14).

Statement of the Poll

- The Statement of the Poll is an accounting of the ballots for Student Vote Day at your school;
- This accounting includes the number of valid ballots, rejected ballots and spoiled ballots;
- The Team Leader will verify the results and sign off on the form;
- This form will constitute the official results of the election at your school;
- Please keep the Statement of the Poll form for a period of one month after the Student Vote parallel election in case your results need to be confirmed.

Properly Marked Ballots

Valid Ballot

To be counted for a candidate, a ballot must clearly indicate the preference of the voter. A voter may mark her or his ballot in any way that she or he chooses in the circle next to the name of the candidate.

The following examples have been provided to demonstrate a properly marked ballot:

- The voter uses a checkmark;
- The voter marks an X;
- The voter uses another type of mark;
- The voter shades the circle.

BRODY BLUE App & Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
TONY TEAL Member/Party/Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
VERONICA VIOLET Party/Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
YASMIN YELLOW Independent/Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>

BRODY BLUE App & Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
TONY TEAL Member/Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
VERONICA VIOLET Party/Party/Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
YASMIN YELLOW Independent/Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>

BRODY BLUE App & Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
TONY TEAL Member/Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
VERONICA VIOLET Party/Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
YASMIN YELLOW Independent/Independent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

BRODY BLUE App & Party/Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
TONY TEAL Member/Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
VERONICA VIOLET Party/Party/Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>
YASMIN YELLOW Independent/Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>

Rejected Ballot

A ballot will not be counted towards any candidate when it does not clearly indicate whom the voter is selecting.

The following examples have been provided to demonstrate a rejected ballot:

- The voter marks the ballot for more than one candidate. This applies even if different symbols are used for different candidates, such as a checkmark for one candidate and an X for another;
- If the voter marks the ballot in a way that identifies who the voter is;
- The voter leaves the ballot blank.

BRODY BLUE Apple Party / parti Pomme	①
TONY TEAL Banana Party / parti Banane	②
VERONICA VIOLET Pear Party / parti Poire	③
YASMIN YELLOW Independent / indépendant	④

BRODY BLUE Apple Party / parti Pomme	<input type="radio"/>
TONY TEAL Banana Party / parti Banane	<input type="radio"/>
VERONICA VIOLET Pear Party / parti Poire	<input type="radio"/>
YASMIN YELLOW Independent / indépendant	<input type="radio"/>

BRODY BLUE Apple Party / parti Pomme	<input type="radio"/>
TONY TEAL Banana Party / parti Banane	<input type="radio"/>
VERONICA VIOLET Pear Party / parti Poire	<input type="radio"/>
YASMIN YELLOW Independent / indépendant	<input type="radio"/>

BRODY BLUE Apple Party / parti Pomme	<input type="radio"/>
TONY TEAL Banana Party / parti Banane	<input type="radio"/>
VERONICA VIOLET Pear Party / parti Poire	<input type="radio"/>
YASMIN YELLOW Independent / indépendant	<input type="radio"/>

Reporting Results

Step 1: Select your method of reporting

A. Report by phone

The call centre phone number is 1-800-780-7840. This will be CIVIX's external call centre for results ONLY. Due to the volume of calls, we ask that you keep your conversation to a minimum while reporting your results.

B. Report online

Please visit www.studentvote.ca/vote/federal15 and follow the prompts to submit your results.

Step 2: Enter/provide your ID and poll code

Your ID and poll code are located on your Statement of the Poll. They will allow you or an operator to access your school and riding information.

Step 3: Report your results

Report the results of your parallel election using the Statement of the Poll form. You will be asked to report the number of votes for each candidate and the number of rejected ballots.

Confidentiality Note:

We require that you and your students keep your school's Student Vote results confidential until the close of the official polls in your riding or province/territory.

This confidentiality is very important to ensure that Student Vote Day results are released at the appropriate time and do not interfere with the official election in any way. **Student Vote results are considered an election survey and releasing the results before the close of polls in your riding is forbidden by the *Canada Elections Act*.**

Any school that releases the results of its election early will be removed from the Student Vote tallies and will be indefinitely suspended from participating in future programs.

Media Relations

While it is not necessary to contact the media regarding Student Vote Day, media engagement is an option that you may wish to consider. Always remember to consult your school board's policy regarding members of the media on school property.

Numerous media outlets will be interested in covering Student Vote at schools and taking pictures on Student Vote Day. If you are interested in media attention for you and your students, please contact the CIVIX team to be put on a short list of interested schools willing to be contacted by the media. You can contact CIVIX via email at hello@civix.ca.

Alternatively, you and your students can contact members of the media and make your own arrangements:

- Consider developing a working relationship early on – reporters tend to enjoy tracking the progress of one school or class in their community;
- Consider inviting the media to different Student Vote events or activities that you are holding throughout the election campaign;
- Consider asking editorial staff to print articles or op-ed pieces written by students.

Please remember that no matter how close a relationship you form with the media, you cannot divulge the results of your school's election. Results will be handled by CIVIX only until they are publicly released on election night. CIVIX will distribute the results to media partners for broadcast and publication following the close of the official polls.

Tally Sheet

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