

Fresno Unified Board Policy (BP) 6142.3

Civic Education

The Governing Board recognizes that involvement in civic and political institutions is essential to a democratic government and desires to expand the district's comprehensive civic education program to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and principles essential for informed, engaged, and responsible citizenship.

The Board shall approve, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent or designee, academic standards and curriculum in civics and government that are aligned with state academic standards and curriculum frameworks.

(cf. 6000 - Concepts and Roles)
(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)
(cf. 6141 - Curriculum Development and Evaluation)
(cf. 6142.94 - History-Social Science Instruction)
(cf. 9000 - Role of the Board)

The Superintendent or designee shall determine specific courses within the K-12 curriculum in which civic education and government may be explicitly and systematically taught. They shall also encourage the integration of civic education into other subjects as appropriate.

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)
(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

The district's civic education program shall provide students with an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in American democracy and the workings of federal, state, and local governments. As appropriate, instruction should include an examination of fundamental American documents, including, but not limited to, the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and other significant writings and speeches. Instruction should also promote a student's understanding of shared democratic principles and values, such as personal responsibility, justice, equality, respect for others, civic-mindedness, and patriotism, and enable students to make their own commitment to these civic values.

Service learning, extracurricular and cocurricular activities, class and school elections, simulations of government, student-led debates, voter education, and observation of local government processes may be used to reinforce classroom instruction by linking civic knowledge to practical experience and encouraging civic involvement.

(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)
(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)
(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)
(cf. 9150 - Student Board Members)

Whenever civic education includes topics that may be controversial due to political beliefs or other influences, instruction shall be presented in a balanced manner that does not promote any particular viewpoint. Students shall not be discriminated against for expressing their ideas and opinions and shall be encouraged to respect different points of view.

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)
(cf. 6144 - Controversial Issues)

Constitution/Citizenship Day

Each year on or near September 17, in commemoration of Constitution and Citizenship Day, the district shall hold an educational program for students in grades K-12 pertaining to the United States Constitution which shall include exercises and instruction in the purpose, meaning, and importance of the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights. (Education Code 37221; 36 USC 106 Note)

(cf. 6115 - Ceremonies and Observances)

Student Voter Registration

To encourage students to participate in the elections process when they are of voting age, the Superintendent or designee shall provide high school students with voter registration information, including information regarding the state's online voter registration system and voting timelines.

The Superintendent or designee shall identify an employee at each high school whom the California Secretary of State may contact to facilitate the distribution of voter registration forms to eligible students. The Superintendent or designee shall provide the business address, phone number, and email address of each contact person to the Secretary of State. (Elections Code 2148)

The designated employee shall determine the most effective means of distributing voter registration forms provided by the Secretary of State, which may include, but are not limited to, distributing the forms at the start of the school year with orientation materials, placing voter registration forms at central locations, including voter registration forms with graduation materials, and/or providing links and the web site address of the Secretary of State's online voter registration system on the district's web site and in email notices sent to students.

The principal or designee may appoint one or more students enrolled at each high school to serve as voter outreach coordinators at that school. The voter outreach coordinator(s) may coordinate voter registration activities at the school to encourage eligible persons to register to vote. With the approval of the principal or designee, the voter outreach coordinator(s) may also coordinate election-related activities on campus, including voter registration drives, mock elections, debates, and other election-related student outreach activities. (Education Code 49041)

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
(cf. 5145.13 - Response to Immigration Enforcement)

During the last two full weeks in April and September, in areas on each high school campus that are reasonably accessible to all students as designated by the principal or designee, the county elections official shall be allowed to register students and school personnel to vote. (Education Code 49040)

School sites will also make available opportunities to register students and school personnel to vote in February.

Fresno Unified School District does not harass, intimidate, or discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ancestry, age, creed, religion, political affiliation, gender, gender identity or expression or genetic information, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, parental or marital status, military veteran status, or any other basis protected by law or regulation, in its educational program(s) or employment.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

54 Student service on boards and commissions

233.5 Teaching of principles

33540 Standards for government and civics instruction

37221 Commemorative exercises including anniversary of U.S. Constitution

48205 Absence from school for jury duty or precinct board service

49040-49041 Student voter registration

51210 Courses of study, grades 1-6

51220 Courses of study, grades 7-12

51470-51474 State Seal of Civic Engagement

ELECTIONS CODE

2146 Student voter registration

2148 Student voter registration, contact person

12302 Precinct boards, appointment of students

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

6711-6716 Education for Democracy Act

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 36

101-144 Patriotic observances

Policy FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Policy Section: 6000 Instruction