



A LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK:

Students Vote 2026



ALL IN TO VOTE

HEY, VOTERS!

The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge encourages active and informed participation in American democracy. Through Students Vote 2026, the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge provides institutions of higher education and their students with guidance and resources to promote nonpartisan voter registration and voting in 2026 elections.

This handbook is written as an aid to college leaders who not only think that educating students about voting is an essential and worthwhile undertaking for an institution of higher learning, but who are also willing to be part of that effort. The leaders in this effort could include individuals who are a part of your campus' voting coalition, as well as the college president, other administrators, faculty members, student affairs staff, student groups, and community partners.

In this handbook, leaders will find important voting information to provide to students and ideas on how to communicate and to encourage their participation in 2026 elections. Together, college leaders across the country can remind, inform, and motivate a very large number of eligible students to vote in November 2026.



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1 What Everyone Needs to Know

★ Voting is a **fundamental right**, but it is also a process that has **deadlines and regulations**. ★

THE TIMELINE



★ **Important Dates**



BEFORE SEPTEMBER 15

Getting Ready

Students can register to vote at allintovote.org by providing the zip code where they will be voting. It’s important to note that many students have a choice on where they register to vote. Students can register and vote based on their campus address (residence hall or off-campus housing) or based on their home or permanent residence. Then, in real-time, they can register to vote. For states that require in-person or mail-in voter registration, the allintovote.org tool will direct them to the appropriate forms that students can print and mail and/or a location where they can register in person.



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

National Voter Registration Day (NVRD)

This year, the universal date for individuals to register to vote and update their registration in time for the general election is September 15, 2026. This is when students should double-check their registration status and make any needed changes to their address, for instance.

Although September 15 is National Voter Registration Day, many students can register to vote beyond this date. Some states even allow registration on Election Day. State-by-state registration deadlines and registration processes can be found at allintovote.org/rules-in-your-state. Clicking on the state brings up even more useful voting information like ID requirements and early voting start and end dates.

Learn more about getting involved with [NVRD](https://nvr.org).

★ **Important Dates**



OCTOBER 5-9
National Voter Education Week (NVEW)

During this week, students should visit allintovote.org/plan to learn what they need to know in order to develop their own voting plan. By selecting the Plan tab at the top of the screen and entering in the zip code where the student is registered to vote, information will populate about candidates, issues, and more:

- Which candidates are on their November ballots on federal, state, and local levels.
- What referendum issues will be on their November ballot.
- Where to vote. Based on the voter registration zip code, the street address of their polling location will appear.
- When to vote. If early voting and vote by mail are an option, this section of the website will indicate when a ballot application needs to be mailed and when it needs to be received. It will also indicate if a state offers early voting, and if it does, the dates and times that people can vote early.

With this information, students will have time to learn about the various candidates and the referendum issues. Students can become well-informed voters in time for the November election and develop their voting plan.



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27
Vote Early Day (VED)

Students who live in a state that allows early voting should plan to vote early on or close to October 27. When Americans vote early, they ensure that last minute problems will not prevent them from casting their ballots – and help shorten voting lines on Election Day for everyone. But voting early rules – both for in-person and by-mail options – vary widely all over the country.

Sign up to celebrate Vote Early Day on Tuesday, October 27.

★ Important Dates



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2 Election Hero Day

Celebrate your students and student-athletes alike that signed-up to be poll workers during any of the 2026 elections on Election Hero Day, November 2, 2026. Election Hero Day aims to recognize the essential role of election administrators, poll workers, municipal clerks, and officials for their contribution to the maintenance of our democracy.

Sign up to be an Election and Poll Worker [here](#).



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3 Election Day

For people who want to vote in person, opted not to vote early, or didn't complete the steps to vote by mail, November 3 is the last day to vote! Some states require voters to provide photo identification in order to cast their ballot, but it varies by state. Different states have different requirements for what ID voters need to bring with them, so students should check their state's requirements on allintovote.org.

★ Common Questions & Answers



Why should I vote?

The right to vote is perhaps the most important liberty you have as an American. It is one of the greatest rights and responsibilities of being an American citizen. Voting is a commitment to the future of this country.



How can I learn about the candidates who will be on my ballot?

Ballot look up tools like allin.vote/research-your-ballot will share information about who the candidates are and where they stand on various issues, their positions, and their bios and ballot measures. Only candidates and ballot measures that appear on your ballot will be listed.

[Allintovote.org](https://allintovote.org) also provides a plan section on the portal which will share information about presidential candidates (when applicable), down ballot candidates and issues, voting precinct locations, and vote-by mail opportunities.



Is voting early a good idea?

Early voting is a good idea, as is mail-in voting. Both of these ways to vote lessen the number of people who vote in person on November 3.

★ Common Questions & Answers



Can I get time off from work to vote?

The laws surrounding time off from work for voting vary from state to state. This [webpage](#) provides information about time off for voting for all states.



Can I trust mail-in voting?

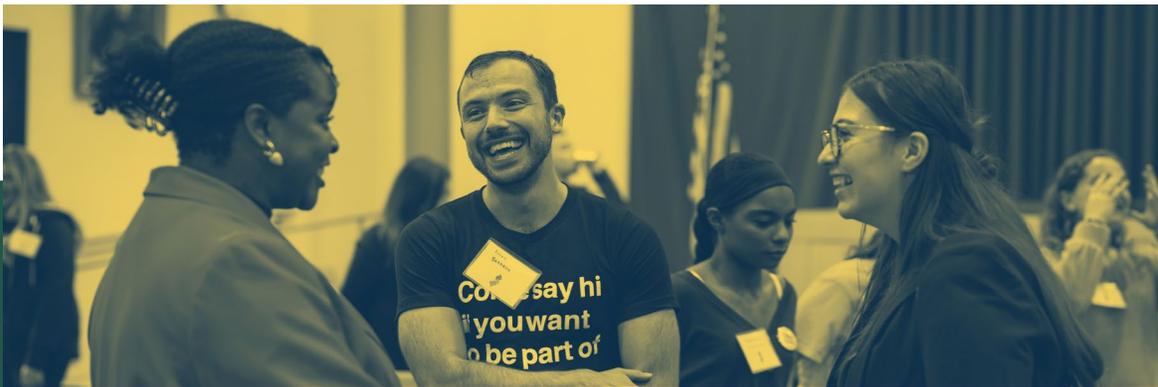
Voting by mail is generally considered to be a safe and secure way to vote. In many jurisdictions, however, it is a low-tech process regulated by laws that have been in effect for many years. The U.S. Postal Service may expect delays around Election Day, so you should mail your completed ballot as soon as possible. Be sure to read ballot instructions carefully, especially any instructions about where your signature is needed.



Where can I get the voting information I need for November?

Check your local elections' website, which you can find through allintovote.org.

2 What College Leaders Can Do



★ Ideally, all eligible voters in the United States would vote, but we know that doesn't happen. College leaders are uniquely positioned to reach out to students and encourage them to participate in the electoral process. Wanting to do something, the question many campus leaders ask is **“how?”** Here are four steps to a successful turn out the vote effort. ★



To guide students through more basic voting questions, check out ALL IN To Vote's [**Voting 101 Guides**](#). These nonpartisan resources can help students navigate out-of-state voting, voting while overseas, early voting, and so much more.

★ College Leader Guide



CHOOSE & CONNECT

Who should be reached & how to reach them

No one needs to do this alone. It's up to you, you choose. Clearly, the first and easiest group to reach are current students, and there are numerous ways to connect with them: email, campus intranets, course software, and more. The most appropriate ways to reach students will depend on the particular college or university. Campus leaders should decide what will work for their college community. Campus leaders might decide to widen the net to include alumni, students on leave, etc.

One potential campus partner could be your local League of Women Voters chapter. Check out ALL IN and League of Women Voter's [Nonpartisan Election Collaboration Toolkit](#) for ways your campus can partner with your local League.



COLLABORATE & COORDINATE

Who should join the outreach effort, how to work together

A college president doesn't need to do this alone. Other campus leaders can join the voting effort. Administrators may have more frequent contact with certain groups of students, and faculty members can get the attention of students in their courses.

Pulling together a group to develop a strategy for reaching students is a good idea, with representation from administration and faculty. Both collaboration and coordination are important in this voting effort. Collaborate with other campus leaders to generate good ideas and make decisions about how to move forward. Then, coordinate your efforts, so people aren't hearing from multiple campus leaders, all with the same message.

★ College Leader Guide



COMMUNICATE & CONVINC

What voting information to provide, how to motivate voting

There are two goals to keep in mind: communicating important information about the voting process and convincing people to vote in November. Reach out to students to remind them why voting matters. And make it locally/regionally relevant, if most students live in the area. Include information from this handbook: dates, questions and answers, and resources. Campus leaders will know what additional information would be helpful. Useful links should also be included.

In addition, you might want to include some motivating statements:

“The right to vote is perhaps the most important liberty you have as an American. It is one of the greatest rights and responsibilities of being a U.S. citizen.”

“Become educated about candidates for Congress and for president, and learn about the local candidates as well.”

“Become educated about the issues that will be on your ballot.”

“Exercise your right to vote.”

For virtual engagement examples check out the work of the [University of California](#) and [New York University](#).



CONGRATULATE & CELEBRATE

How to acknowledge/recognize accomplishments

If the goal is to get out the vote, is there a way to follow up? Maybe the outreach communication can include a link so that people can report they have voted. Maybe a follow-up email goes out that congratulates them for doing so. And what about a celebration/party on Election Day?

3 Resources



ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge

ALL IN is a national nonpartisan initiative of Civic Nation, a 501(c)(3) organization. Established in 2016, the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge has grown to more than 1000+ campuses with a reach of more than 10 million students. ALL IN now has active state level challenges with Secretary of State offices and other nonprofit supporters in 24 states and cities. ALL IN also supports athletic conference voting challenges across the following athletic conferences: America East, ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Big Sky, Conference USA, Ivy League, MAAC, MAC, MIAC, NESCAC, OAC, Pac-12, SAA, and SoCon.

ALLINtoVote.org

[ALLINtoVote.org](https://www.allintovote.org) is a one-stop shop for campuses and their students to navigate the voting process. This site is an essential tool for helping campus leaders put together materials for their students and to navigate support for their geographically diverse student bodies. This site provides students with tools to pledge to vote, register to vote, confirm their voter registration, determine how and where to vote, and understand what is on their ballot. ALL IN also has the capacity to offer free custom-branded nonpartisan voter registration portals to participating ALL IN campuses. For more information about how your campus can obtain a portal, [review this one-pager](#).

ALL IN TO VOTE



Campus Vote Project

The Fair Election Center's Campus Vote Project (CVP) has created state-specific guides that provide details on what ID requirements there are for registering to vote and to present at the polls as well as relevant information to meet a state's guidelines for voting in general. These can help a student-athlete understand the parameters necessary to exercise their vote regardless of the state in which they register and choose to vote.



Election Hero Day

November 2 is Election Hero Day. Election hero Day aims to recognize the essential role of election administrators, poll workers, municipal clerks, and officials for their contribution to the maintenance of our democracy.



Election Protection – 866 Our Vote

The national, nonpartisan Election Protection coalition was formed to ensure that all voters have an equal opportunity to participate in the political process. Made up of more than 100 local, state, and national partners, Election Protection works year-round to advance and defend the right to vote.



National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement

The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) a signature initiative at the Jonathan M. Tisch College for Civic Life at Tufts University offers colleges and universities an opportunity to learn their student registration and voting rates and, for interested campuses, a closer examination of their campus climate for political learning and engagement and correlations between specific student learning experiences and voting.



National Voter Education Week

The National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) a signature initiative National Voter Education Week is October 5–9, 2026. National Voter Education Week is designed to help voters bridge the gap between registering to vote and actually casting a ballot. During this week of interactive education, voters will learn to find their polling location, understand their ballot, make a plan to vote in person or remotely, and more.



National Voter Registration Day

September 15 is National Voter Registration Day. You can organize an in-person, social media, and/or email campaign to make sure your peers check their voter registration status and confirm it is where they want to vote and encourage students to register and re-register to vote as needed.



Power the Polls

Power the Polls is a first-of-its-kind initiative to recruit the next generation of poll workers and volunteers to ensure a safe, fair election for all voters.



Vote 411

This site offers zip code relevant election information, including candidate bios and voting records, and where they stand on various issues. Brought to you by [The League of Women Voters Education Fund](#).



Vote Early Day

Vote Early Day is October 27, 2026. 200 million Americans are eligible to vote early, but voting early rules — both for in-person and by-mail options — vary widely all over the country, causing confusion and preventing voters from casting their ballots. Vote Early Day is a collaboration among businesses, colleges, nonprofits, technology platforms, election administrators, influencers, and community leaders to help all eligible voters learn about their options to vote early and celebrate the act of voting early.



VoteRiders

VoteRiders provides voter ID assistance so that every American can cast a ballot that counts. For a full breakdown of state voter regulations, check out their state-by-state guide available on their website.



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[ALLINTOVOTE.ORG](https://allintovote.org)