



**COLLEGE OF SAINT BENEDICT
AND SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY**

VOTER ENGAGEMENT CAMPUS PLAN

**FACILITATED BY THE EUGENE J. McCARTHY CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
SERVING THE COLLEGE OF SAINT BENEDICT AND SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF
Saint Benedict  **Saint John's**
UNIVERSITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University (CSB+SJU) 2022 Voter Engagement Campus Plan is developed by the CSB+SJU Votes Coalition within the Eugene J. McCarthy Center for Public Policy and Civic Engagement at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University.

This emerging plan was written by Matt Lindstrom, Edward L. Henry Professor of Political Science and Director of the Eugene J. McCarthy Center, Victoria M. Evans, Civic Fellow at the Eugene J. McCarthy Center, and McCarthy Center Student Coordinators: Brianna Kreft, Emmett Adam, Claire Boettcher, and Landon Peterson.

CSB+SJU is committed to empowering students in global engagement, civic engagement, and citizenship as outlined in its Institutional Learning Goals. Since its founding in 2006, the Eugene J. McCarthy Center has created venues for constructive, responsible, and interesting civic debate and engagement in community affairs. The McCarthy Center continues to empower students to be civically engaged leaders within our community and as global citizens. Our mission is to cultivate the habit of promoting the common good through an integrative environment for learning. We promote the value of politics, our shared identity as citizens, and an engagement in public work.

Students working with the Eugene J. McCarthy Center established a new voting focused coalition in 2018. CSB+SJU Votes is a collaborative coalition with a united, non-partisan goal to increase student voter participation. This student led coalition provides resources for CSB/SJU students on voter registration, where to vote on campus, absentee voting and promotes over all civic engagement in our community. CSB+SJU Votes also encourages students who are not be eligible to vote to utilize the powerful role they play in shaping voter turnout.

This plan serves as a review of CSB+SJU Votes to date and to communicate goals in 2022 and beyond for the CSB+SJU Votes, leadership with the Eugene J. McCarthy Center and the overall community of the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. We have the following goals for the 2022-2023 academic year:

1. Register 90% of eligible CSB+SJU students;
2. Increase overall student turnout rate on both campuses to 85%;
3. Deliver effective non-partisan events and programming to the CSB+SJU student body to develop voter literacy, through wholistic social media and physical guides for all – national, state, and local – candidates;
4. Promote alternative approaches to same day voting, by assisting with absentee voting, mail-in voting, early voting, and transportation to voting locations with campus stakeholders in order to assist students with the registration process;
5. Engage students who are not eligible to vote with meaningful volunteer opportunities with the Coalition and local stakeholders to provide access to all students interested in civic engagement.

The action plan began in the Spring of the 2021-2022 academic year and will continue until the 2022 midterm elections. This plan will be implemented through leadership and members of the 2022-2023 Votes Coalition and evolve throughout the Fall to best accommodate the goals of the Votes Coalition.

*From “Bread Night” talks in the dorms to “Democracy Dogs” at the bustops, the CSB/SJU Votes coalition is created **by students, for students.***

BUILDING ON 2020

The CSB/SJU Votes coalition began as a nonpartisan push for student participation in the 2018 Midterm Election, and in that year we had a record-breaking turn-out. The 2020 General Election expanded on the momentum from 2018 and established the Votes coalition as a real difference-maker when it came to voting on campus. This year, we are working to build on efforts from 2018 and 2020, developing a plan to continue growing and encouraging student voting participation.

MISSION STATEMENT

To develop a collaborative, campus-wide initiative that will provide a programmatic approach to foster the importance of civic engagement, specifically voting, among students at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University.

To promote students’ beliefs about the importance of voting and to bring a spirit of celebration to civic engagement.

To educate students on how to register to vote, where to register to vote, and why registering to vote is so important. To educate students who may not be eligible to vote on how to utilize the powerful role they also play in shaping voter turnout in our community.

To offer resources for students about the candidates and issues that will appear on the ballot, as well as performing student opinion polls.

LEADERSHIP

The Eugene J. McCarthy Center for Public Policy and Civic Engagement leads the CSB/SJU Votes Coalition through dynamic partnerships and teamwork.

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STUDENT LEADERS

Brianna Kreft '22

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Landon Peterson '24

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COMMUNITY LEADERS

The following community members will serve in a partnership role with the Votes Coalition, advising on outreach and other initiatives: Dr. Brian J. Bruess (CSB+SJU Inaugural Joint President), Mike Connolly (Vice President for SJU Student Development), Mary Geller (Vice President for CSB Student Development) Rick Schultz (Mayor of St. Joseph, MN) Senator Aric Putnam (MN SD-14), Rep. Dan Wolgamott (MN 14B), CSB+SJU Political Science Department Professors, and Mary Bruno (Bruno Press).

COALITION MEMBERS

Coalition members include at least two students representing the following organizations and clubs at CSB/SJU. As CSB/SJU Votes reaches more students, faculty, staff, we have seen an increase in student volunteers within the clubs and organizations already committed to the mission and beyond. Increasing involvement in the coalition throughout CSB/SJU is a major goal of CSB/SJU Votes. At the start of 2020, invitations were emailed to more campus clubs and organizations with coalition members attending club meetings to increase awareness, get feedback on how to improve and create lasting partnerships.

Current members include the Eugene J. McCarthy Center for Public Policy and Civic Engagement, Saint Ben's Senate, Saint John's Senate, United Politics, College Republicans, College Democrats, the Sister Nancy Hynes Institute for Women's Leadership, the Men's Development Institute, the Bonner Leader Program, Climate Justice Club, and Exploring Latin American Cultures.



For the 2022 Midterm Election, CSB/SJU Votes will be pursuing partnerships/memberships with the following clubs, organizations, and institutions: Athletics, Residential Life and Housing (Residential Assistants), the Indigenous Student Association, Hmong Americans Involving Students, Alpha Kappa Sigma Service Sorority, Bennies in Business, Climate Justice Club, Chess Club, Campus DJs, Crew, Club Sports, Speech and Debate Club, Enactus, St. Jude at CSB/SJU, Special Olympics, Students Demand Action, Students for Life, The Record, Advocates for Inclusive Mentoring, Buzzed, CERTS, CSBeats, Johnnie Blend, Student Athlete Advisory Committee, Extending the Link, First-Generation Organization, Outdoor University, Peer Resource Program, QPLUS, and more.

COMMITMENT

As outlined by the Office of Academic Assessment and Effectiveness at CSB/SJU, every department utilizing the institutional goals to encourage students to think deeply, embrace difference, engage globally, serve graciously, and live courageously. In developing the 2022 Voter Engagement Campus plan and goals with both CSB/SJU Votes and the Eugene J. McCarthy Center, these institutional goals were used as a guide.

Within the institutional goal to engage globally, our students commit to global engagement, civic engagement and citizenship. These skills include an understanding of justice and the common good, awareness of social responsibility and knowledge of world systems and their points of intersection/divergence. The CSB/SJU learning experience will provide students with opportunities to reflect on their place in the world, experience different cultures, and practice social responsibility and leadership both locally and globally.' (<https://www.csbsju.edu/academic-affairs/oaae/learning-goals-andoutcomes/institutional-learning-goals>)

Student leaders with CSB/SJU Votes will be securing the ALL IN Challenge Presidential Commitment at the start of the 2022-23 academic year with Transitional President Dr. James Mullen Jr. of Saint John's University and Transitional President Laurie M. Hamen, J.D. of the College of Saint Benedict.

LANDSCAPE

With the support of the student polling team within the Eugene J. McCarthy Center, a detailed landscape of the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University as related to civic learning, civic engagement, voter participation and political climate is being developed.

During the presidential primary elections in early 2020, the polling team surveyed 227 student responses related to the primary election and political affiliation. The polling team was created in 2018 and has conducted seven student surveys so far on a variety of policy related issues from freedom of speech to abortion. Future polls will be created and analyzed for a more full landscape for future voter engagement campus plans.

NSLVE DATA

National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement

The College of Saint Benedict

Saint John's University

84.8%

81.5%

Per NSLVE data, 84.8% of students from the College of Saint Benedict voted in the 2020 general election.

Per NSLVE data, 81.5% of students from Saint John's University voted in the 2020 general election.



	College of Saint Benedict	Saint John's University
2016 Registration Rate	91.8%	85.7%
2018 Registration Rate	87.5%	84.5%
2020 Registration Rate	92.2%	91.8%
2016 Voting Rate	81.3%	70.8%
2020 Voting Rate	84.8%	81.5%

GOALS

Short Term Goals (2022 Elections)

Building on the the establishment of CSB/SJU Votes in 2018 and the success in both 2018 and 2020, the short term student voter engagement goals center around keeping that momentum going and creating a campus culture of civic engagement. These goals were created using data from both the 2018 Midterm Elections and 2020 General Elections.

Register 90% of eligible CSB+SJU students

Increase overall student turnout rate on both campuses to 85%

Deliver effective non-partisan events and programming to the CSB+SJU student body to develop voter literacy, through wholistic social media and physical guides for all – national, state, and local – candidates

Promote alternative approaches to same day voting, by assisting with absentee voting, mail-in voting, early voting, and transportation to voting locations with campus stakeholders in order to assist students with the registration process

Engage students who are not eligible to vote with meaningful volunteer opportunities with the Coalition and local stakeholders to provide access to all students interested in civic engagement.

Long Term Goals (beyond the 2022 Elections)

As CSB/SJU Votes, the Eugene J. McCarthy Center and all of the CSB/SJU community continue to create a culture of voter engagement, the long-term goal is to continue the next generation of civically engaged citizens. Our long term goal is to have 95% of eligible CSB/SJU students vote by 2030 by making voting and overall civic engagement a core value of each CSB/SJU student from the time they accept admission to CSB/SJU and beyond graduation.

STRATEGY

In order to meet 2022 Student Voter Engagement Goals, CSB/SJU Votes will focus on strategies in the following areas:

Increasing Campus Awareness

As a relatively new initiative, it is important to continue to bring attention to CSB/SJU Votes across both campuses and the CSB/SJU community.

Voter Registration

CSB/SJU Votes will encourage voter registration to be an ongoing opportunity beyond National Voter Registration Day.

Voter Education

CSB/SJU Votes will continue to provide resources and opportunities for student voter education.

Voter Participation

CSB/SJU Votes will continue to empower students to vote in the 2022 Elections.

EVALUATION

We will employ the following strategies to measure a successful plan:

Increasing Voting Rate

- Monitor Fall program participation
- Connect with Student Activities and Leadership Development to assess Fall programming attendance totals
- Deliver a survey to students to gauge success, gather critical feedback, and record party affiliation
- Ensure group sponsored programming receives bipartisan support by connecting with campus organizations and both College Democrats and College Republicans

Timeline

- Survey student knowledge of deadlines and programming in Exit Survey

Voter Guide

- Manually record what percentage of physical voter guides are used
- Track virtual engagement with voter guide and cross reference with followers and average engagement rates
- Finalize number of groups impacted

Strategy

- Poll classes on quality of programming
- Orally assess strategy with Administration, local community members and organizations, and politicians to determine effectiveness of engagement

APENDIX

May - August

- Order shirts, stickers, and more items to incentivize engagement
-
- Contact Dr. James Read to assist development of Voter Guide
-
- Contact Administration, local community members and organizations, and politicians to confirm role in Coalition
-
- Update website with key dates, resources, and programming opportunities
-
- Confirm campus organizations and clubs' sponsorship of events and Coalition
-
- Confirm drop in vote encouragement pitch dates with Political Science Faculty
-
- Confirm tabling opportunity to increase voting turnout with CSB+SJU Orientation
-
- Compile Student members of Coalition

October - November

- Promote voting through in person programming
-
- Promote voting on social media
-
- Observe/promote "Vote Early" day on 10/24
-
- Collaborate with POLS Department to host Debate watch parties
-
- Table each week to promote voting and alternative civic engagement
-
- Distribute Voter Guide with Dr. Read with physical copies, virtual versions, and in The Record
-
- Shuttles on election day