



Hennepin Technical College Democratic Engagement Action Plan: 2024-2025 Academic Year

This plan was created using the Votes & Ballots Action Planning Form. We highly recommend editing and expanding upon this draft before submitting for review.

Throughout this document, we mention the Strengthening American Democracy Guide as a resource for your review. We encourage you to turn to that resource for guidance and support as you complete your action plan!

I. Executive Summary

This action plan was developed by Stephen Harper, Director of Student Life and Career Development in collaboration with Student Senate, campus leadership, statewide Student government organizations and local community partners to communicate our strategy for increasing both the registration and turnout rates of voters at Hennepin Technical College. The planned activities outlined here will be carried out over 2024-2025 Academic Year, on and around our campuses in Brooklyn Park and Eden Prairie, Minnesota.

The following groups will be leading this work at Hennepin Technical College in order to accomplish our goals and further institutionalize our commitment to civic learning, democratic engagement, and youth participation in elections:

- Undergraduate Students
- Faculty
- Student Affairs Staff
- Local non-profit community organizations (CAPI)
- State student Government organization (LeadMN)

The mission of our initiative is:

- Increase campus-wide understanding of the registration and voting rates of Hennepin Tech students and their access to civic learning and engagement opportunities.

The plan's focus on education and engagement will center on events and informal gathering opportunities such as: celebrate voting registration, democracy, constitution, and voting days to encourage student participation at least twice a year. Engage with faculty and staff unions to bolster voting registration including providing reports of student registration rates and including the development of a relevant websites for students about voting and get out the vote efforts.

II. Leadership

Stephen Harper, Director of Student Life and Career Development will be overseeing our work to increase civic learning and democratic engagement on campus. They will be supported in this work by:

- Faculty union leadership (Monica Erling, Brad Thorpe), Student Senate executive board (five students per campus - ten total), College President (Joy Bodin) College Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (Leanne Rogstad), campus partners and local democracy organization (CAPI, LeadMN)

This coalition is diverse and inclusive of:

- Representation from different parts of campus, including student leadership, representation from different perspectives and areas of expertise, trusted leaders and organizations who support communities that are historically underrepresented in democracy, Leaders who can help with outreach and power building by bringing more people across campus in to our work

Our group plans to meet once per year at Faculty Duty Days (various dates each year)

In the event that our leadership leaves campus or is no longer involved in this work, we have a succession plan in place. The position is tied to the team, not the individual so that all information will be tied to that role as long as the position stays in place. Additionally, as part of Sec. 8. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 135A.17, subdivision 2, Sec. 23. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 201.1611, subdivision 1, Sec 14. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 201.061 requirements Hennepin Tech will be partnering with Hennepin County (Nicole Asche) to provide student voter residential information for outreach purposes.

We are also partnering with the following organizations from the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition to support our efforts on campus:

- All in Democracy Challenge, LeadMN, Campus Compact, League of Women Voters

III. Commitment

Our institution and our campus leadership demonstrate commitment to improving civic learning and democratic engagement. We also see this same commitment reflected in our institution's values. They state, "Excellence: We pursue the highest standards in academic achievement and organizational performance. Innovation: We value creativity and ingenuity to remain at the forefront of technical education excellence. Inclusion: We value an atmosphere of respect, dignity, and acceptance."

On campus, we've seen:

- Voter education resources
- Political clubs or student organizations
- Campus leaders promoting voting
- Voter registration tables
- Signage promoting Election Day
- DC and state capital Visits with students

On campus, we've experienced:

- Voting in student body elections
- Political speakers
- Town halls
- Registering to vote
- Civic Holiday events (such as National Voter Registration Day, National Voter Education Week, and Vote Early Day)

The emphasis on civic learning and democratic engagement could be increased.

IV. Landscape

The following tables provide a brief overview of the landscape of our campus. This information is based on data collected from the 2022 Minnesota State Colleges and Universities guidebooks.

Enrollment Data:

Undergraduate	Graduate	Full Time	Part Time
100.00%	0.00%	61.00%	39.00%

In-State	Out-of-State	International Students	On-Campus Residents	Commuter
98.00%	1.00%	1.00%	0.00%	100.00%

Gender Demographics:

Men	Women	Non-Binary	Transgender
57.00%	42.00%	0.01%	0.00%

Age:

18-21	22-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50+
40.00%	17.00%	21.00%	8.00%	4.00%	1.00%

Racial Demographics:

Asian	American Indian / Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	White	2 or More Races
11.00%	1.00%	18.00%	9.00%	1.00%	55.00%	5.00%

Our institution has also utilized the following data gathering tools:

- National Survey of Student Engagement
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement

● Boynton Health Survey

They help to inform our institution's civic learning and democratic engagement efforts as intentional outreach tools for how to engage and who to partner with when engaging students. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement helps determine student desire for certain types of events and the Boynton Health Survey helps us understand specific mental, physical and economic health of our students to best support them wholistically. Most data is collected through IR.

V. Goals

Before setting our civic learning and democratic engagement goals on campus, we took the following information into consideration.

We know our campus faces following challenges internally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

- Our institution's mission statement, values, and strategic plan do not mention civic learning and democratic engagement.
- We don't have someone whose job responsibility is to foster civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- We don't have processes in place for registering large percentages of our students.
- We don't use the resources readily available to develop and implement civic learning and democratic engagement on our campus.
- The voter engagement work on our campus is very siloed within one office.
- We don't have sustainable or consistent funding.
- We have trouble engaging student leaders for the leadership of our initiative.

We also know our campus faces the following challenges externally when it comes to get out the vote efforts and registering voters:

- We don't have a working relationship with our local election office.

With that said, we know our campus has the following strengths when we approach our voter engagement work:

- We have ways in which we communicate voting information to our students.
- Voter engagement efforts on campus are nonpartisan.
- We have working relationships with community partners who are invested in civic learning and democratic engagement.

With this in mind, we have set the three goals that we would like to achieve over the next academic year:

- To increase the percentage of students ages 18-24 who voted by 5% from 2018 data for the 2022 election. (pending results)
- Include Civic engagement in the new 5 year strategic plan going through revisions this academic year.
- Send 1 underrepresented student per campus to Washington DC in partnership with Lead MN during CTE Advocacy Days.

We have also set three goals that we would like to achieve over the next five years:

- Achieve voting rate parity with students ages 30-29 with students who are 50+.
- Increase black/African-American student voting rates to 60%
- Host a candidate forum on campus for the 2026 election.

VI. Strategy

Below, we have outlined a strategy describing how we will bring this vision to life in the coming months and years.

These are tactics that we **are already doing** in the **short term** (within the next year):

- Voter education programming, constitution day, national voter registration day, campus partner tabling and working with very local community partners

These are tactics that we **plan to do** in the **short term**:

- know my ballot initiatives, speakers from different local organizations and leveraging resources from other groups to best support our students.

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **short term**:

- Multiple touchpoints per year with students and completing required state level reports

These are tactics that we **are already doing** for the **long term** (beyond the next year):

- Update civic engagement clubs and organizations and build 2 more meaningful partnership with outside organizations.

These are tactics that we **want to do** in the **long term**:

- create 3 candidate connection opportunities for students and build on organizational successes around voter registration events

These are tactics that we **hope to do** in the **long term**:

- Sustainable funding for robust student driven get out the vote initiatives and election education for all student levels.

VII. National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)

Our campus has access to our National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) data for 2020. In 2020 our registration rate was 74.6. In comparison to the data from four years prior in our NSLVE report, this rate increased by 8%.

In 2020, our voting rate was 83.6% and our voting rate among registered students was 62.3. During this year, our voting rate was higher than the national average and over twenty percent higher than Hennepin Tech's 2018 numbers.

In our NSLVE report, we had racial data for the following groups:

- Asian
- Black
- Hispanic
- White
- 2 or More Races

For the racial groups that have recent voter turnout data, we saw the following groups increase in voter turnout compared to four years ago.

- Asian by 23%
- Black by 12%
- Hispanic by 20%
- White by 25%
- 2 or More Races by 20%

Smallest margin of difference between younger voters and voters 50+ compared to previous years

VIII. Reporting & Evaluation

We plan to share this Action Plan internally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Email to members of our campus coalition
- Email to campus administration
- Email to the President

We plan to share this Action Plan externally when it is complete by taking the following actions:

- Post on the campus website

We will collect feedback on this plan by:

- Sending a post-election survey to faculty
- Regrouping with campus coalition to debrief and reflect
- Integrating feedback collection into individual campus efforts

We plan to evaluate our success by:

- Reviewing our NSLVE data and looking for improvements year over year
- Seeking out feedback throughout the action planning process from people outside of our action planning team
- Revisiting our goals, identifying goals achieved and not achieved, and adjusting our short and long-term goals accordingly
- Reviewing our partner organizations and their role in supporting students