



# **Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan May 2024**

## **Engage the Electorate Committee**

Woodrow McLendon, LSC-Houston North

Ralph Angeles, LSC-North Harris

Clark Friesen, LSC-Tomball

Bryan Henry, LSC-University Park

Erika Herrera, LSC-North Harris

Dr. Kelly Jacobs, LSC-Houston North

Dr. Cassandra Khatri, LSC-University Park

Michele Richey, LSC-Montgomery

Jennifer Ross, LSC-Online

Dr. John J Theis, LSC-Kingwood

# Table of Contents

## Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	2
LEADERSHIP.....	3
System Leadership.....	3
Campus Leadership.....	4
COMMITMENT.....	7
LANDSCAPE.....	8
System-wide Overview.....	8
Campus Specific Information.....	10
GOALS.....	11
Civic and Voter Education.....	11
Voter Registration & Turnout.....	13
STRATEGY.....	14
YEAR 1.....	14
YEAR 2.....	14
YEAR 3.....	15
REPORTING.....	19
EVALUATION.....	20

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of Lone Star College's proposed program is to enhance, fortify, and systemize Civic Engagement activities that focus on civic and voter education, voter registration, and voter turnout. Civic engagement strategies and events aim to provide access to all faculty, staff, and students at LSC, and impact LSC's broader service area in Greater Houston.

This plan reflects the culture of the LSC System. One of the LSC Core Values is Community, of which civic engagement is included in the description. Additionally, LSC has a list of Core Objectives for its academic endeavors and this list includes critical thinking, social responsibility, and personal responsibility, all of which are furthered by this plan.

LSC, a Texas public community college, has a service area of more than 2,700 square miles with a total population of 2.7 million residents. Recently celebrating 50 years of service, LSC provides high-quality, low-cost academic transfer and career training education and enrolls more than 80,000 students each semester. LSC consists of eight colleges (including an online campus), eight Workforce Centers of Excellence, five satellite centers, and two University Centers. Furthermore, LSC employs 6,900 full- and part-time faculty and staff. This plan was developed to reflect who we serve at LSC.

Six of the LSC's seven physical college campuses have Centers for Civic Engagement, each with a designated faculty representative. The newest colleges, LSC-Houston North and LSC-Online do not have formal Centers for Civic Engagement; however, they have designated representatives to plan and facilitate civic engagement activities. LSC-Houston North participates in civic engagement initiatives facilitated by several faculty and that involve active community partnerships. Through this proposed project, LSC Civic Engagement faculty and grant personnel will collaborate to combine, replicate, and scale best practices and strategize to implement new initiatives that address electoral participation among students, faculty, and staff.

Implementation of this plan is already under way, as most of it was developed as part of the grant application already mentioned. While the grant supporting the work of this plan is for three years, this specific plan will focus on year one deliverables beginning in the fall 2024 semester and ending at the end of the summer 2025 semester, at which time a new plan for year two will be enacted.

# LEADERSHIP

This plan reflects a system wide effort to enhance, fortify, and systemize Civic Engagement activities that focus on civic and voter education, voter registration, and voter turnout. Civic engagement strategies and events aim to provide access to all faculty, staff, and students at LSC, and impact LSC's broader service area in Greater Houston. The size of our leadership team reflects the size of the population we hope to serve through the events in this plan.

## System Leadership

Engage the Electorate Committee: LSC will execute the proposed plan through the coordination and collaboration of the Engage the Electorate (EE) Committee. The EE Committee will consist of grant personnel and faculty representatives. LSC's proposed project will use grant funding for a full-time EE Project Coordinator, and three (3) part-time EE Assistants. The EE Project Coordinator will oversee the coordination and planning of events that use grant funds, reporting, event metrics, and other duties that ensure the success of the program. The EE Assistants will report to the EE Project Coordinator and assist with events and event planning, providing support for civic engagement activities that are occurring concurrently at different campus locations. The faculty representatives (most serving as leads for the Centers for Civic Engagement) at each LSC campus have the institutional knowledge and subject matter expertise and have developed the various EE programs that make up the proposed plan. As such, they will advise and guide the grant personnel. The faculty and grant personnel will meet regularly as an EE Committee for short and long-term planning and evaluation of the proposed program. Additionally, the proposed plan includes at least one student fellow assigned to each campus to assist with carrying out the grant activities, providing valuable student representation to strategy development and program planning.

Project Coordinator: In order to facilitate this system-wide program, a Project Coordinator will be hired to oversee associated grant deliverables including but not limited to reporting, facilitating activities and events, supervising the Project Assistants, attending EE Committee Meetings, ensuring grant activities and events follow Houston Endowment and LSC policies (e.g., non-partisan activity), and collecting data (e.g., participant attendance at events).

Project Assistants: The Project Coordinator will oversee the work of three Project Assistants. The Project Assistants will assist the coordinator with grant activities and events at LSC's campuses, facilitating and organizing events.

Student Fellows: Each campus will have a student fellow. The cost for student fellows is based on the estimation that Campus Vote Project will fund 3 student fellows who will be placed at 3 of the 8 college campuses (including LSC-Online). LSC is requesting funding for 5 additional student fellows to allow all colleges' campuses to have a student fellow. Students are expected to spend 10 hours per week on the program.

Stakeholders/Community Partners: Organizations that are engaged in this project include but are not limited to:

- Mi Familia Vota
- Bonding Against Adversity
- The League of Women Voters
- Houston Public Library, Harris County Public Library, Montgomery Country Public Library

## Campus Leadership

Each campus will have either one person or a group of people to facilitate programming involving their specific campus and community.

### *LSC-Houston North*

LSC-HN Center for Civic Engagement Coordinator (Primary): Kelly Jacobs

Administrative Support: We are supported through office of LSC-HN the Vice President of Instruction (Dr. John Maynard) and our Director of Special Projects LSC-HN (Ernesto Valenzuela)

The campus Civic Engagement team has two campus coordinators, Prof. Kelly Jacobs (Political Science), Prof. Woodrow McLendon (Political Science) and Prof. Stephen Washington (Math), who are trying to establish a larger committee of faculty (from various disciplines including English, Political Science, Humanities, History, and others), staff, and student leaders to fit Houston North's unique structure and needs. Houston North does not have a long-established Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) being a newer campus created only a few years ago. Our focus will be on creating a more robust civic engagement program by expanding our existing programs with organizations we already partner with such as our Student Government Association and Harris Votes. It is our belief that our institution is uniquely positioned to help our students and our community to become more aware and engaged in meaningful ways. With this in mind, we seek to create a program that provides professional development opportunities for our faculty and staff and educational experiences for our students that encompass local, state, national and global perspectives. Since our campus consists of four "mini campuses" across the northern Houston area some of our programs will be conducted in hybrid/online modalities. Currently, one of our mini campuses is a voting location (Victory Campus) and another shares a parking lot with a voting location (Fallbrook Campus).

### *LSC-Kingwood & Centers*

LSC-K Director of Civic Engagement - Dr. John J Theis, Professor of Government

The LSC-K Center for Civic Engagement falls under Academic Affairs and works across the campus with a variety of campus faculty and staff, particularly in student life. As the first campus civic engagement program in the Lone Star College System, LSC-K has been a leader in developing programs such as Deliberative Dialogues, Public Achievement and Alternative Spring Break, the Human Library, and the Hunger Banquet. The Center has also held Voter registrar training, voter registration drives and hosted speakers and other events on campus. Programs are implemented by faculty and students and the Center works with campus and community organizations to encourage students to think about their role as citizens in a democracy. The Center has worked with a variety of campus partners in the past including the Kingwood Democrats, Kingwood Republican Women, Harris County, the West Lake Houston Chamber of commerce, Mi Familia Vota, and local area churches.

### *LSC-Montgomery & Centers*

LSC-M Campus Coordinator for Civic Engagement - Michele Richey, Professor of Sociology

Administrative Support - Ashley Levenson, Coord III, Academic Excellence Division

Administrative Support - Steve Simon, Business Manager, Academic Excellence Division

The LSC-M Center for Civic Engagement falls within the Academic Excellence (ACE) Division, which also includes the Library, Student Tutoring and Research Center, and the Faculty Resource Center. The LSC-M CCE has one faculty campus coordinator who is paid a stipend for this secondary

assignment, and the ability to hire work-study student workers. Most programming is facilitated by the Campus Coordinator with the support of committees and the ACE Division staff, and it is the Campus Coordinator who will oversee implementing and assessing this plan, under the guidance of the ACE Division Dean. Efforts by the LSC-M Center for Civic Engagement are strongly supported by the upper administration on the LSC-M campus.

There are many other groups and individuals, both on campus and within the community that are often engaged in helping to organize and facilitate programming efforts. Faculty are often tapped to serve on committees for specific programs to help develop the programs and participate in the programs based on their subject content expertise. Staff are engaged in programming and educational efforts as well and the LSC-M CCE co-sponsors programs regularly with different student organizations. Students are compensated for their efforts through being paid (work study students), having their involvement count towards their service requirements (for example Honors College students who are required to complete service hours), college credit (for students in a civic engagement related learning community and or with civic engagement related assignments), and/or programming funds (for registered student organizations). Faculty and staff are compensated through involvement counting towards their required institutional service.

There are several groups the LSC-M CCE works closely with from the community. The Montgomery County Volunteer Deputy Registrars are frequently on campus to help register students to vote and provide information and demonstrations about voting. The Montgomery County League of Women Voters has also been a key stakeholder in our voter registration/education/motivation efforts. Finally, the LSC-M CCE is part of a working group on Montgomery County voting rights, which meets monthly virtually and includes members from the two groups already mentioned as well as representatives from the Texas Civil Rights Project, Disability Rights Texas, Move Texas, and Democracy from the Ground Up.

### ***LSC-North Harris & Centers***

LSC-NH Campus Co-Coordinator for Civic Engagement - Ralph Angeles, Professor of Political Science

The LSC-NH Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) is housed under the Office of the Vice President of Instruction. The CCE has two campus coordinators, Prof. Erika Herrera, and Prof. Ralph Angeles, who work closely with each other by developing and hosting programs together, but with some variation between the two coordinators to ensure that civic engagement is viewed as a holistic initiative.

Erika Herrera, Professor of Political Science, is the Campus Coordinator. She leads the committee, primarily holding monthly committee meetings and developing and hosting events focused on civic participation and education on various local and national issues. With the help of the Social Sciences Division, the Operations Manager is also in charge of all the administrative requirements related to the funding the CCE receives.

Ralph Angeles, Professor of Political Science and Campus Co-Coordinator, extended the civic engagement scope to global and intercultural issues, equipping faculty and students with the understanding and tools to act as informed global citizens and addressing critical political, social, and economic issues, promoting empathy, and appreciating various backgrounds. Within the scope of the grant, Ralph Angeles will lead the “Engage the Electorate” initiative.

The CCE committee consists of 7 faculty members and 1 staff members, who help to support the program through various means, such as attending and volunteering at events, inviting speakers,

hosting events, and promoting student attendance and involvement.

For several years, the CCE works in partnership with the following organizations to further its mission:

- **Mi Familia Vota:** a national nonpartisan nonprofit organization that works to build Latino political power through civic participation.
- **Texas League of Women Voters:** a state nonpartisan nonprofit organization that works to empower and educate voters.
- **Harris Votes:** a nonpartisan nonprofit local governmental entity that works to encourage voter registration and participation.
- **Compass Learning:** a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that works to empower youth to become financially literate and civically engaged in their communities.

As part of the grant initiative, the CCE will expand its community partnership to enhance connections and allow students to participate in civic activities, such as a Community Fair, in which students will have the opportunity to meet with representatives of different nonprofit organizations and find volunteering opportunities.

### ***LSC-Tomball & Centers***

LSC-T Center for Civic Engagement Coordinator: Professor Clark Friesen (Speech)

Administrative Support: At Tomball, the CCE is supported through the Vice President for Instruction office

The CCE, from its inception, has been a faculty-driven program, supported by a committee of faculty members and student leaders. Most civic engagement activities are faculty developed or student planned and executed. Our campus has had close ties with the Harris County League of Women Voters and has directed Campus Vote Project student fellows for two years. Most recently, we have instituted one of the only community college chapters of Jolt, which registers voters with a focus on Latinos. As Tomball is designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution, we see this as a meaningful partnership. Our EE grant activities will be intended, in part, to educate all voters particularly focused on Latino concerns.

### ***LSC-University Park***

LSC-UP Center for Civic Engagement Coordinator: Bryan Henry, Professor of Government

Administrative Support: At UP, the CCE is supported by the Vice President for Instruction and Behavioral and Social Science Division.

The CCE aims to cultivate intellectual curiosity, facilitate community dialogue, and inspire ethical civic participation by providing programs and opportunities that enable students to identify and embrace their civic obligations both to ennoble their own lives and to positively impact their local, national, and global community. Programming includes voter registration events in partnership with Mi Familia Vota and the League of Women Voters and Engage the Election events with candidates and elected officials. The Lyceum Lecture Series hosts guest speakers and authors that give presentations on important civic, political, and ethical issues.

The STAND UP annual forum convenes a panel of experts to discuss a contemporary issue from a variety of perspectives.

## COMMITMENT

Many of LSC's college campuses have a history of campus-wide civic engagement efforts, embedding its purposes and activities across multiple campus functions including academic departments and organizations. In 2022, LSC System earned the inaugural ALL IN Most Engaged Campus for College Student Voting recognition (Civic Nation, ALL IN Democracy Challenge). Since the beginning of the civic engagement efforts by faculty at LSC, the registration rate for students increased from 55% in 2014 to 72% in 2020 (NSLVE Campus Report, September 2022). The voting rate among registered students increased from 23.2% to 72.4% over the same period. While this is impressive, the registration and voting rates still lag behind the average of associate degree-granting institutions. The proposed program plan involves developing a system-wide civic engagement program, called Engage the Electorate, which aims to provide access to all students, faculty, and staff, unify the best practices and strategies developed by each campus, deepen the impact of campuses' efforts, and allow each campus to remain empowered to customize selected strategies and events based on local community partners and campus cultures. The Engage the Electorate program will include a program of activities and events, some system-wide and others campus-specific. This program of programming will be revised, updated, and improved based on the evaluation and measured impact of events and new initiatives proposed by the EE Committee. (See Engage the Electorate Program attachment) The activities and events will center around Civic and Voter Education, Voter Registration, and Voter Turnout.

Due to the large geographic nature of the system and recognizing that each college campus serves a different community, there will be a two-category approach to build out civic and voter education, registration, and turnout programs. System-wide or All Campus Participation programs will be planned and organized by the EE Project Coordinator and implemented by campus EE teams. College campuses may choose additional optional events listed under the Campus Select Participation category. These activities and events will occur on a campus-by-campus basis with each campus building on its strengths to maximize program impacts.

LSC will leverage several departments to ensure the success of the proposed project goals. Several of LSC's academic and student service departments will have active roles in many of the proposed civic engagement activities. Additional leveraged support departments include:

- LSC Analytics & Institutional Reporting (AIR) provides data collection, tracking, and analytics.
- LSC Information Technology provides technical support 7 days a week to LSC employees and students.
- LSC Financial Reporting & Operations provides program financial support, including purchasing, accounting, fixed assets, treasury, and payroll.
- LSC Resource Development and Administration (RDA) provides program and LSC Grants Accounting financial technical support to ensure efficient and effective project management, including guidance related to the contract, programmatic and financial requirements, and reporting (i.e., OMB circular)
- LSC Office of Culture and Engagement supports a systemwide approach that provides students, employees, and community with a sense of belonging and access to opportunities.
- LSC has been a member of the National Study on Voting, Learning, and Engagement (NSVLE) for almost a decade, providing data on student registration and voting.



# LANDSCAPE

## System-wide Overview

LSC identifies 6 core objectives that faculty and staff should strive to include in all educational opportunities: Critical thinking, communication (writing), communication (oral), empirical and quantitative skills, teamwork, social responsibility, and personal responsibility. While civic learning and democratic engagement are not specifically included, all the core objectives are skills that enhance civic learning and democratic engagement. Election education programming does address all core objectives in addition to increasing voter/civic engagement within our community. These core objectives are measured and assessed annually by the system.

LSC follows a five-stage assessment process to gauge LSC students' mastery of the 7 Gen Ed competencies/Core Objectives. The first stage is faculty training. In the fall, online training is provided to approximately 100 faculty randomly chosen from across the institution. The training reviews the core assessment process, the common rubric used to assess core objective learning, how the instructor can align his/her individual assignments to the rubric and submit the students' work as a student artifact of learning. The second stage is implementation. Faculty then give their core assignment to students to complete and implement any recommendations for improved learning they wish.

The third stage is data collection. At the end of the fall term, faculty submit their students' work to be "scored." Scoring is the fourth stage of the assessment process. In the Spring, volunteer faculty participate a "Scoring Day" - assessing student artifacts using the common rubrics. Training concerning the overall core assessment process and rubrics is provided at the beginning of the session which also serves to calibrate scores. Each artifact is scored by two Scorers to determine students' level of learning of the Core Objective. Data are collected and published in core assessment results reports by the office of Strategic Planning & Assessment (SPA).

The last stage of the assessment process is the use of data. Core Assessment results and a feedback survey are shared with faculty who participated in the assessment activities, either as faculty submitting artifacts or as a Scorer. These faculty are then prompted to analyze the data, identify areas of potential improvement, and provide recommendations that other faculty can use to improve student learning of the core objectives. This information is collected and reviewed by the core assessment committee (there is a subcommittee for each core objective with a representative from each campus). Finalized recommendations are published on the GenEd website and shared with faculty and leadership and imbedded within the faculty training for the next cycle of assessment.


In addition to the core outcomes to be included in every class, there are other ways civic learning and democratic engagement are embedded in curriculum. The Texas Core Curriculum, set by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, is designed to empower students with foundational knowledge and transferable skills guided by a strong sense of values, ethics, and civic engagement. There is a Government/Political Science requirement within the core. Courses in this category focus on consideration of the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions of the states, with special emphasis on that of Texas. Courses involve the analysis of governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and their political and philosophical foundations.

**Opportunities:** The Engage the Electorate proposed project has the support of the LSC leadership at the system level and at each college campus. There are established Centers for Civic

Engagement at most college campuses and faculty representation throughout the entire system, and the Engage the Electorate committee has experienced faculty to guide the program plan. Furthermore, LSC's Cultural Beliefs (LSC Strategic Plan, 2020-2025) aligns with this program through its system wide 'One LSC' approach to provide equitable access and opportunities to all members of the community. An additional opportunity is the multi-year effort in progress to bring immersive technology to students across the system. Five campuses are in various stages of development and a robust community of faculty and staff are regularly contributing to this development which will enhance how rapidly the EE goals can be achieved systemwide with help from the grant.

**Barriers:** LSC's service area is vast, and this can present a challenge when engaging in system-wide efforts. The EE Committee's focus on collaboration, evaluation, and equitable access will help to address this barrier. LSC's civic engagement faculty representatives have reported an attitude of disinterest and mistrust in the democratic system, noting the continuous political bickering contributing to the problem. This project aims to re-establish enthusiasm for civic engagement and understanding of the importance of every individual's contribution to civic engagement and the democratic process. In addition, many of LSC's students are not eligible to vote and one goal of this project is to ensure all students feel represented and encouraged to engage.

**Campus Voting Data:** LSC participates in the NSLVE survey and has data on student voting for every federal election going back to 2012. System-wide our voting rate from 2020 was 52.1%, which is up 13.1% from the 2016 election. 72% of our voting-eligible students were registered to vote and of those students, 72.4% actually voted on Election Day. While we have improved overall from 2016, we still fall below the 66% voting rate of all the institutions that participated in NSLVE. Those students who do register vote at pretty high rates, but only a little over half of eligible voters actually register and vote. This is a potential area of growth for LSC. In addition, 81% of voters from our college voted early, which suggests that our educational programming should occur pretty early each election season to provide as much education on the election as possible before early voting begins. Finally, if you look at our voter rates broken down by field of study, the following programs had the lowest percentage of eligible voters vote: Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians, Precision Production, Science Technologies/Technicians, Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Protection, all of which are part of our workforce programs. This suggests more outreach is needed within our workforce programs regarding voter registration and education efforts.

**Texas Political Climate:** Since the U.S. Supreme Court ended federal oversight of elections in 2013, there has been increased efforts within the state of voter suppression, often under the premise of protecting against election fraud despite any data that election fraud is a wide-ranging issue for the state. According to the ACLU, Texas has a few areas that contribute to voter suppression. The first is that Texas does not offer online voter registration or election day registration, making the process of exercising your right to vote a bit more complicated. Texas also severely limits who can vote by mail, putting up additional roadblocks to election participation. If you happen to qualify for voting by mail, there are specific requirements to the process that makes it easier to reject mail in ballots for small errors. Polling places are limited, especially in urban areas, making for long lines and extending the time it takes to exercise your right to vote, especially on election day. Texas also has one of the strictest voter ID requirements in the country and has placed limits on the help individuals with disabilities or who speak limited English can receive when they vote. Finally, Texas imposes severe criminal penalties for misunderstandings about election law that appears to disproportionately prosecute women of color. 

Please note that due to the provisions of SB17 in Texas, we are unable to address the topics of diversity, equity, or inclusion in this plan.

## **Campus Specific Information**

### ***LSC-Houston North***

LSC-Houston North (HN) does not currently have any courses designated for civic engagement outside of our “core” classes. While some faculty and program specific classes (such as our Puente program classes) include content relating to civic engagement, there are no classes that we currently have with a specific civic engagement focus. We do have at least one student organization with a civic engagement focus. It is part of our Student Government Association’s mission, “We, the students of Lone Star College - Houston North, in order to preserve and defend the rights and privileges of student’s self-governance, to guarantee a student voice and involvement in College decisions, to serve the common interests of students, to train ourselves in democratic government, and to promote citizenship on campus and the community, do hereby establish this Constitution of the Student Government Association” (from HN SGA (Student Government Association) Constitution). Our committee will work closely with them and other student groups to create and promote our civic engagement program.

### ***LSC-Montgomery & Centers***

LSC-Montgomery does not currently have any civic engagement designated courses. While many faculty choose to include content relating to their discipline regarding civic engagement, there are no classes with an official civic engagement focus. We also do not have a civic engagement specific student club/organization, but we partner with any student organization that is interested in doing non-partisan civic engagement programming. Our campus is building back our Student Government Organization, so the intent is to connect and partner with them as soon as they are up and running. We also partner with the Office of Culture and Engagement to offer civic engagement programming to support their efforts.

# GOALS

The goals of LSC's proposed program will focus on a three-pronged approach, *civic and voter education, voter registration, and voter turnout.*

## Goal 1: Earn designation as an LSC system-wide Voter Friendly Campus by Campus Vote Project

One LSC college campus has been designated as Voter Friendly Campuses, and through the proposed plan, the EE Committee will submit a statement of interest, and subsequently develop a system-wide plan for designation as an LSC System-wide Voter Friendly Campus. The following goals will support establishing LSC as a system-wide designated Voter Friendly Campus.

## Civic and Voter Education

### Goal 2: Enhance current efforts to ensure all students, faculty, and staff have access to participate in Engage the Electorate activities.

LSC's students, faculty, and staff represent a diverse community in the context of socio-economic backgrounds, areas of study (e.g., workforce, academic, non-credit, associates, bachelors, etc.) student status (e.g., full-time, part-time, online, etc.), racial and cultural backgrounds, political beliefs, and more. The proposed plan aims to enhance current efforts that may have been providing access to specific interested groups so that all students, faculty, and staff feel represented, included, and encouraged to participate. To achieve this, the EE Committee will strategize comprehensive dissemination of events by communicating with groups that connect with students, faculty, and staff (e.g., student organizations, LSC Office Culture and Engagement, Professional Support Staff Association, LSC leadership, Adult Education Literacy program, etc.). Additionally, events and activities announcements will be shared through internal email, on social media, and other methods depending on the event (e.g., Election Day posters). Furthermore, The EE Committee proposes to develop a dedicated section on the LSC website and mobile application focused on civic engagement. This platform will offer resources, event calendars, voter registration and election day reminders.

*Incentive to Participate:* The success of the proposed plan requires faculty, staff, and students to participate in events and do more than they are currently doing in the context of civic engagement. The EE Committee acknowledges the need to provide external incentives\*, as appropriate for each event, such as food, music, certificates of participation, and items that foster a sense of community, social belonging, and enjoyment. Due to multiple years of natural disasters in the greater Houston area and the enrollment decrease as a result of the Pandemic, LSC has been focused on student support and crisis recovery with little or no resources to support program development or growth.

*\*Any incentives will be accessible to all participants and not based on registration, voting, or partisan activity.*

### Goal 3: Educate students about the political process to increase their trust and sense of agency in their roles in the process and their engagement in community affairs.

The proposed Civic Engagement program will ensure that there is a consistent and layered approach to civic engagement education. Civic engagement education will address:

- U.S. Government and the electoral process
- Civic rights and responsibilities and the impact of civic engagement
- Political and election issues including but not limited to:
  - Income inequality
  - Criminal justice
  - Foreign policy
  - Environmental protection and climate change
- Positive examples and role models (e.g., guest speakers)

Civic engagement education will occur deliberately throughout many of the events listed in the program (e.g., Human Library, Hunger Banquet, Civic Engagement Week, etc.) and will include discussions about contemporary topics and issues. Additionally, the EE Committee proposes to enhance other educational approaches through curriculum development, experiential learning and immersive technology, and field trips.

*Facilitating Deliberate Discussions-* The proposed plan will facilitate student participation in discussion and dialogue about relevant issues and topics that influence their trust in and comfort with the political and electoral system. The EE Committee recognizes that students live in a world where political disagreements and polarization are the norm. Additionally, many students come from nations where elections and those seeking office are known to be corrupt. The proposed program will encourage students to engage in discussion and dialogue through activities and events that offer safe and respectful spaces to ask questions and express their ideas and perspectives. The EE Committee believes that by confronting students with issues, they will better understand the importance of civic engagement. The proposed program will challenge students to create a habit of voting, to recruit other voters, and join community organizations related to issues. Specific Civic Engagement activities that promote discussion and dialogue among students include Deliberative Dialogues, Human Library, and Unify America Challenge.

*Curriculum Development-* The EE Committee will identify opportunities where civic and voter education and the democratic process can be imbedded into course curriculum. The expected impact of integrating civic and voter education in courses is that many more students will understand the connection between their coursework and community/voting issues and therefore be more likely to participate in the general election.

*Experiential Learning and Immersive Technology-* Experiential learning will be practiced through civic engagement internships, service-learning, and immersive technology in campuses' Experience and Innovation Labs. Immersive content includes 360 videos found on platforms, such as YouTube, that places students in circumstances that expand their understanding of the world, provides them with new perspectives, and helps them develop a sense of empathy. Research shows conclusively that those who learn in virtual reality (VR) do so many times faster than in traditional forms and retain the information longer (Virtual Speech, 2021). The use of immersive technology provides increased accessibility and equity to students who may have limited access to transportation or experience other barriers to in-person participation. Some of LSC's campuses have VR headsets to use curated applications surrounding various topics including racism and homelessness that allow students to understand the work on both a micro and global scale. The EE committee proposes to fund VR headsets allowing all campuses to provide students with experiential learning opportunities and to expand access to relevant applications.

*Field Trips* - The EE Committee proposes to send students to various events and conferences including the Tribune Fest in Austin, the Juneteenth event in Galveston, and other events related to civic engagement.

**Goal 4:** Enhance campus civic engagement culture by providing professional development to faculty and staff and hosting guest speakers.

The proposed plan includes funding faculty and staff travel to conferences including the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Conference and the American Political Science Association Teaching and Learning Conference. The knowledge and training acquired by staff and faculty attending these and other relevant events will be shared with colleagues across the entire college system through workshops, webinars, and seminars ensuring a broad impact. Additionally, funding may be allocated to external workshops and professional development through online training and webinars accessible to all faculty and staff. By proposing a system-wide plan, professional development and guest speaker opportunities can be shared by several or all campuses.

The EE Committee proposes to select guest speakers who will inspire electoral participation and civic engagement. Seeking guest speakers whom LSC students are familiar with and even passionate about may inspire civic engagement and electoral participation and build trust in the process.

## **Voter Registration & Turnout**

**Goal 5:** Increase the number of registered voters among LSC's students, faculty, and staff.

***Voter Turnout:*** All activities in the proposed plan are developed to inspire, encourage, and increase voter registration; however, there are some activities that directly address voter registration and educate students on the steps to become registered voters. For example, students will have access to videos that demonstrate the registration process. The EE Committee proposed several events that facilitate voter registration, such as the Collaborative Voter Registration Drives with Mi Familia Vota and the League of Women Voters. As some students may not be eligible to register and vote due to citizenship or age, activities will include information about how to prepare to become voters in the future. Students, faculty, and staff can easily register online through LSC's link to TurboVote.

**Goal 6:** Increase the number of campuses that are voting locations.

Some of the LSC's college campuses have hosted voting locations, and the proposed plan intends to leverage community partnerships to expand the number of college campuses that are designated voting locations to assist with access and equity to faculty, students, and staff.

# STRATEGY

The EE Committee has developed the following list of measurable milestones that we expect to achieve.

## YEAR 1

### *April 2024-August 2024*

- Develop and Submit Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan to Campus Vote Project and Houston Endowment
- Hire and train Project Personnel
- Finalize the Engage the Electorate Committee and meeting schedules
- Plan fall voter engagement events
- Student trip field trip
- EE Committee begins work on establishing LSC campuses as voting locations
- Faculty and EE Project Coordinator attend the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Conference
- Recruit and train faculty to develop civic learning modules for Fall 2024.

### *September-December 2024*

- Develop and implement voter registration and turnout programs impacting the 2024 election
- Seek to increase voter registration by 10 percent and voter turnout by 5 percent
- Finalize plans for next quarter (2025) events and activities (e.g., Black History Month, Deliberative Dialogues, Unify Challenge)
- Student field trip
- Recruit and train faculty to develop civic learning modules for Spring 2025

### *January-April 2025*

- Implement EE events and activities appropriate to the timeframe (e.g., MLK activities, Black History Month, etc.)
- Evaluate the election season impact from Engage the Election activities and events
- EE Committee determines registration and voting metrics based on fall 2024 impact
- Faculty and EE Project Coordinator attend the American Political Science Association's (APSA) Teaching and Learning Conference
- Evaluate registration numbers through LSC Turbovote

## YEAR 2

### *May-August 2025*

- Develop and Submit Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan to the Campus Vote Project
- Plan fall voter engagement events for state elections, reflecting on the previous year's impact, successful events, and areas of improvement.
- Faculty and EE Project Coordinator attend the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Conference
- Update Engage the Election program of activities and events, seeking to maintain voter engagement and increase voter turnout in the state elections
- Student field trip
- Recruit and train faculty to develop civic learning modules for Fall 2025.

### ***September-December 2025***

- Implement voter registration and turnout-focused activities focusing on state elections
- Implement additional EE events and activities appropriate to the timeframe (e.g., Hispanic Heritage Month)
- Student field trip
- Recruit and train faculty to develop civic learning modules for Spring 2026.
- Seek to increase voter registration leading up to state elections

### ***January-April 2026***

- Faculty and EE Project Coordinator attend the American Political Science Association's (APSA) Teaching and Learning Conference
- Implement EE events and activities appropriate to the timeframe (e.g., MLK activities, Black History Month, etc.)
- Evaluate the election season impact from Engage the Election activities and events
- Evaluate registration numbers through LSC Turbovote

## **YEAR 3**

### ***May-August-2026***

- Develop and Submit Voter Friendly Campus Action Plan to the Campus Vote Project
- Faculty and EE Project Coordinator attend the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Conference
- Plan fall voter engagement events for mid-term, reflecting on the previous year's impact, successful events, and areas of improvement.
- Recruit and train faculty to develop civic learning modules for Fall 2026.

### ***September-December 2026***

- Student field trip
- Recruit and train faculty to develop civic learning modules for Spring 2027.
- Seek to increase voter registration leading up to mid-term elections
- Implement voter registration and turnout-focused activities focusing on mid-term elections
- Implement additional EE events and activities appropriate to the timeframe (e.g., Hispanic Heritage Month)

### ***January-March 2027***

- Faculty and EE Project Coordinator attend the American Political Science Association's (APSA) Teaching and Learning Conference
- Evaluate registration numbers through LSC Turbovote
- Implement EE events and activities appropriate to the timeframe (e.g., MLK activities, Black History Month, etc.)
- Complete final report of program activities

In addition, each campus, in line with the system goals and milestones, will set their own programming calendar. The following is a general outline of EE programming that will occur on each campus. The following is a list of potential programs broken down by system-wide programs and campus-level programs. Each campus will choose which programs to facilitate based on their specific campus needs.



ACTIVITIES, EVENTS, AND STRATEGIES	DESCRIPTION	TARGET AUDIENCE	TIMEFRAME
<b>Civic and Voter Education Focused</b>			
<b>System-wide or All Campus Participation</b>			
<b>Candidate Forums</b>	Candidates and elected officials visit campuses to discuss topical issues and encourage electoral participation	Students, Faculty, Staff, & Community	Biannually
<b>Speaker Series</b>	Guest speaker series including scholars and authors presenting about contemporary civic engagement issues also called the Lyceum Speaker Series	Students, Faculty, Staff, & Community	Annually
<b>Constitution Day</b>	A day commemorating the U.S. Constitution and its ongoing relevance with workshops, interactive exhibits, and guest speakers	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Annually
<b>Campuses Select Participation</b>			
<b>Debate Watch Parties</b>	Big-screen and virtual viewing of candidate debates	Students, Faculty, Staff	Annually
<b>Human Library</b>	Individuals volunteer as 'human books,' sharing their unique experiences to foster dialogue, reduce prejudices, and encourage understanding	Students, Faculty, Staff, & Community	Annually
<b>Hunger Banquet</b>	Participants gain insight into global wealth and food distribution based on randomly assigned income levels, fostering awareness of policies and legislators that address socioeconomic disparities.	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Annually
<b>Deliberative Dialogues</b>	Engaging in civil discourse on controversial topics in a safe space to promote understanding, critical thinking, and the importance of voting	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Annually
<b>Global Citizenship Activities</b>	Activities such as Story Circles, Global Coffee Hour, and Intercultural Competency sessions foster global understanding and empathy and encourage students to vote with a broader, global perspective considering the global significance of their vote	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Biannually
<b>National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS)</b>	Students participate in this leadership development opportunity and participate in civic engagement-related events, such as debates and presentations	Students	Ongoing
<b>MLK Day</b>	Community service at local nonprofits during MLK Day when LSC is closed	Eligible Students, Faculty, & Staff	Biannually

<b>Hector Garcia Day/National Hispanic Heritage Month</b>	Activities and guest speakers to recognize the impact of community leaders and inspire participation and local civic engagement	Students, Faculty, Staff, & Community	Annually
<b>Democracy Classroom Initiative</b>	Integrate modules on civic engagement and the democratic process into the curriculum providing students with foundational knowledge and inspiring active participation.	Students	Semesterly
<b>Civic Engagement Week</b>	A week dedicated to civic engagement, including workshops on understanding civic rights, responsibilities, and the electoral process	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Annually
<b>Free Speech Week</b>	Activities include guest speakers on media literacy, civic engagement, deliberation, free speech wall on campus all week, debate or speaker rebroadcasts, poetry slam event	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Annually
<b>Enhanced+Library Card</b>	A full-service library card that can be used as a form of ID for voter registration.	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Ongoing
<b>Net Impact/Up to Us</b>	<i>Up to US</i> competition is a national leadership development program that aims to increase public awareness and understanding of fiscal and economic challenges in the US.	Students	Ongoing
<b>Unify America Challenge</b>	Students participate in online conversations with politically opposite college students fostering critical thinking, empathy, and understanding of contemporary issues	Students	Biannually
<b>Street Law Program</b>	An organization that provides training materials that assist students and individuals in understanding law and government, foster the rule of law, and empower marginalized communities.	Students	Ongoing
<b>Immersive Technology</b>	Immersive VR technology that provides students with historical and civic engagement experiences.	Students	Ongoing
<b>Voter Registration Focused</b>			
<b>System-wide or All Campus Participation</b>			
<b>National Voter Registration Day</b>	Voter registration drives with Mi Familia Vota, League of Women Voters, and other community partners	Students, Faculty, Staff, & Community	Annually 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in September
<b>Constitution Day</b>	Encouraging voter registration activities during Constitution Day activities.	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Annually
<b>Turbo Vote</b>	Turbo Vote access through LSC: <a href="https://lonestar.turbovote.org/">https://lonestar.turbovote.org/</a>	Students, Faculty,	Ongoing

		and Staff	
<b>Campuses Select Participation</b>			
<b>New Citizens Guide to Voting</b>	Work with partnering public libraries, providers of citizenship preparation classes, to encourage voter registration and demonstrate the voting process.	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Ongoing
<b>Enhanced+ Library Card</b>	Enhanced Library Cards is a full-service library card that can be used as a form of ID for voter registration.	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Ongoing
<b>Voter Turnout</b>			
<b>System-wide or All Campus Participation</b>			
<b>Election Day Campus Event</b>	Host events on election days to celebrate democracy, including watch parties for election results, discussions, and booths providing information about the electoral process.	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Local, State, and Federal Election Days
<b>Campuses Select Participation</b>			
<b>Walk the vote</b>	Students walk to the early voting location to cast votes together.	Students, Faculty, and Staff	Local, State, and Federal Election Days

## REPORTING

This plan, and future VFC plans, will be shared with the Houston Endowment, as part of their requirements for the grant we received. In addition, each year the plan will be assessed and the VFC plan reports will be shared with them as well. In addition, this and future plans/reports will be shared with the leadership team that oversees all civic engagement efforts as part of the campus coordinator's program reporting. Finally, this plan will be posted on the official Engage the Election website as part of the LSC website and will be accessible by anyone, internal and external.

# EVALUATION

The following are specific metrics that will be monitored to assess/evaluate program goals. The purpose of these identified milestones is to assess the progression of the program over the next 3 years.

- Goal 1:** Earn designation as an LSC system-wide Voter Friendly Campus by Campus Vote Project
- LSC System will successfully earn the designation of Voter Friendly Campus in 2025 and 2026
- Goal 2:** Enhance current efforts to ensure all students, faculty, and staff have access to engage and participate in Engage the Electorate activities.
- Over the 3-year period, student, faculty, and staff participation in Engage the Electorate Activities will increase by 20%.
- Goal 3:** Educate students about the political process to increase their trust and sense of agency in their roles in the process and their engagement in community affairs.
- Over a 3-year period, student participation in optional Engage the Electorate activities will increase by 20%.
  - Over the 3-year period, module additions to courses will increase by 10%
- Goal 4:** Enhance campus civic engagement culture by providing professional development to faculty and staff and hosting guest speakers.
- At least 2 guest speakers for Engage the Electorate topics will be hosted each year
  - 3 to 5 professional development opportunities (workshops, conferences, webinars, etc.) will be provided each academic year
- Goal 5:** Increase the number of registered voters among LSC's students, faculty, and staff.
- Increase voter registration by 10%
  - Increase users of Turbovote by 25%.
- Goal 6:** Increase the number of campuses that are voting locations.
- Increase voter turnout by 5%
  - Establish at least 5 campuses as voting locations

Additionally, for each specific event/program the following information will be gathered year one to create benchmarks to assess participation and inform years two and three programming.

- Planning and budget information for all programming efforts so that they can be used by other campuses trying to implement similar programs.
- The number of students participating in each campus event (including names and ID numbers).

LSC also participates in the NSLVE and will use the data collected for the 2024 National Election to track progress on voter engagement and to set new goals/milestones if applicable.