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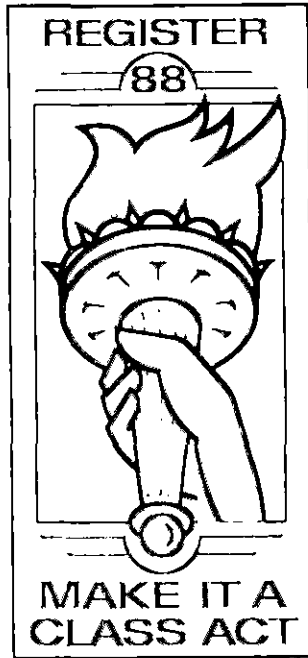
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**REGISTER**

**88**



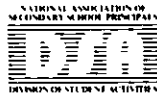
**MAKE IT A  
CLASS ACT**



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# STUDENT VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE BOOKLET

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## Why Have a National Student Voter Registration Drive?

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High school seniors across the USA will take part in the 1988 presidential elections. To do so, in all but one state, they must be registered.

The 2.7 million members of the Class of '88 hold the key to the future in their hands. Informed young voters will have an impact on selecting the President, Senators, and Congressmen, and on such critical issues as taxes, transportation, crime, minimum wage, drinking age, draft registration, school improvement, etc.

To celebrate the Bicentennial of the signing

of the U.S. Constitution, the NASSP has been awarded a grant by the Maurice R. Robinson Foundation of *Scholastic Magazine* to sponsor a nonpartisan, student-based voter registration drive through the student councils in the nation's 22,500 high schools.

Given the opportunity to register in school, young people will be prepared to accept the challenge to vote in '88, so REGISTER '88—MAKE IT A CLASS ACT. This campaign will be a practical example of students making a difference.

## What's the Goal of the Program?

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The goal is to register 100 percent of eligible high school students before their graduation. This will enable them to partici-

pate in the 1988 presidential elections and carry out their role as responsible citizens.

## When Does the Drive Take Place?

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The campaign is targeted for National Student Leadership Week, April 25-30, 1988.

In states where there is an early primary, schools may prefer an earlier drive. Make

certain that state registration deadlines can be met.

NASSP packets should arrive by the first week of February 1988.

## Who Does It?

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The Student Council in each school, working in coordination with other student groups, such as class officers, Honor Society, school newspaper, athletes, and with input from faculty members will coordinate the drive. This is planned to be a campaign with students helping to register students, a "hands-on" citizenship experience. One idea is to make it a junior class "tradition" and have the juniors run the drive for the senior class.



# How Do We Set Up a Registration Drive in Our Schools?

The guidelines outlined in this booklet give you the basics of setting up a program; you can be as innovative as you like in developing your school's drive.

## ***5 Steps to a Successful School Registration Drive***

1. Organize the Registration Drive Committee
2. Contact local election officials, and League of Women Voters as soon as possible
3. Plan the drive
4. Conduct the drive
  - Identify eligible students
  - Publicize
  - Motivate
5. Follow up

**Keep in Mind:** The approval of the school principal is required for all school-related activities.

Nonpartisanship must be maintained throughout the drive; have both political sides represented.

Incentives must be of non-monetary value.



## ***Organize the Registration Drive Committee***

Following receipt of the NASSP kit, the student council should form a Registration Drive Committee and select a chairman. It will be the task of this committee to plan and carry out the registration drive.

Consider how the suggestions and materials in the NASSP kit can help you make plans for your school. Review pertinent articles in the October 1987 and January 1988 *Student Activities* magazine describing registration campaigns that have worked in schools throughout the country.

*Some preliminary questions can help you get started:*

- Has your school conducted a registration drive before? Was it successful? Ideas that worked may be used again.
- Is your social studies department, local board of elections, League of Women Voters, or other organization planning a drive in your school? If so, consider coordinating the campaigns.
- What are the goals of your drive? Put these in writing and refer to them throughout the drive. When this project is finished, you will be able to evaluate how it went, based on your initial goals.
- Who needs to approve this project? Your adviser and principal are two obvious people; there may be others. Prior to meeting with your principal, the committee should consider:
  - What you plan to do
  - When the drive will take place
  - What funds are needed
  - Initial ideas for publicity.

This initial planning is important to show your principal and/or faculty that this is a worthwhile program that deserves their support.

Upon completion of the initial organization and planning steps, you are ready to continue! This first step is important, as it gives you a solid foundation upon which to build a successful registration drive!

## Contact Local Election Officials and the League of Women Voters

The Registration Drive Committee should contact local election officials or the registrar to arrange for a school registration drive, describe preliminary plans, ask their advice, and confirm the latest registration requirements for your district. This is a busy year for election officials; they need to be made aware of your drive as soon as possible.

The Constitution guarantees the right of all citizens over the age of 18 to vote; however, election laws are determined by the state, and the process varies from state to state. For example, no registration is necessary in North Dakota and some rural areas of Wisconsin. Registration in some states is as simple as mailing in a postcard; in other states an official registrar must be present. Maine, Minnesota, and Wisconsin permit registration at the polls on Election Day. Many states have registration deadlines; if the deadline is not met, you will be unable to vote.

The NASSP kit includes a chart summarizing recent state registration information.

Questions you should ask your local election board or League of Women Voters are:

- What are the legal requirements of holding a voter election drive in our school? (time, location, etc.)
- How old does a person have to be to register? May 17-year-olds who will be 18 by general election day register? May they vote in a primary?
- How long does a person have to have lived in his or her state to be eligible to register? In the county? In the district?
- What ID is required at the time of registration? Do new citizens need additional ID?
- May you register by mail? Must the mail registration form be notarized?
- Who may serve as registrar in your district? Do they have to be deputized, and if so, how? May the principal serve as registrar? (This is permitted in more than 20 states.)
- How far ahead of the primary do the registration books close? How far ahead of the general election do the registration books close? This is especially critical if your school is considering an earlier drive to register students so they may participate in a primary.
- What official forms must be filled out?
- Do you know if other organizations are planning a voter registration drive in your school? Can these be coordinated with your drive?
- Do you have to register at a central site?
- Should students who won't be in the area at the time of the general election register to vote?



Eligible young people who plan to be away at school, in the service, or traveling at the time of the general election are encouraged to register and fill out an application for an absentee ballot. The application should be provided by your local registrar's office; after receiving the absentee ballot application, the absentee ballot will be sent to the voter prior to the election.



## Plan the Drive

A major task of the Student Voter Registration Committee is to choose the type of drive that will be the most effective plan for your school as well as fun and informative. You will want maximum student involvement.

Registration can be conducted in:

- A junior/senior assembly or class meeting
- A classroom or homeroom using part or all of the period
- At tables or booths in hallways, cafeteria, study halls, etc.
- A combination of the above.
- Where a central registration site is required by law (e.g., Mississippi), you might consider how you could assist students in getting to the site.

In selecting the format for your school's drive, consider the school's enrollment, the schedule, and the physical plan of the building. Try to plan activities that will interest all students, not just the highly involved ones. What would it take to motivate them to register to vote—speakers, a debate, endorsement by a celebrity, maybe a "registration ID" to provide recognition or eligibility for a school activity.

Registration is voluntary, but the goal of REGISTER '88—MAKE IT A CLASS ACT is to attract the maximum number of young people to become eligible to participate in the voting process as adults.



## Conduct the Drive

### How Do We Identify Students Who Are Eligible To Register?

The committee should obtain an accurate list of students eligible to vote from the adviser's or guidance office. Refer to the chart in the NASSP kit, confirmed by your local election officials, whether 17-year-olds in your district who will be 18 before Election Day are eligible to register. In nine states and the District of Columbia, anyone who will be 18 by Election Day is eligible to register and vote in the primaries as well as the election: Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

Remember that the registration books in most states close 30 days, but as much as 50 days, before the primary or general election.

The total number of these eligible students will be the basis for calculating the percentage of students registering before graduation. Some students may already be registered and should be counted toward the total you report.

Send for free NASSP stickers. (See P.R. kit for order form.)

Decide how you will record the names and addresses of students as they register. In some districts, the local board of elections will provide an official form which must be returned to them or to the state election board at the conclusion of the drive. Keep a list of registrants for the use of your principal or adviser.

### Who Will the Workers Be?

The committee should recruit the volunteer drive workers. How many you need will depend on the type of drive selected. The volunteers may be from such student groups as:

- Class officers
- Honor Society
- School paper
- Athletic groups

- Service clubs
- Political clubs
- Any other interested students.

Including sophomores and juniors on the committee will provide a source of experienced workers for conducting student voter registration drives in subsequent years.

### ☐ How Can We Let Everyone Know About This Program?

Publicity is a key to the success of the drive. You will find helpful PR ideas, sample scripts, and camera-ready ads in the NASSP kit. The more student-generated the PR, the more effective. Build on the theme, "Register '88—Make It a Class Act."

The committee will need to plan publicity: what you will do and when. Once the initial plans are finalized, you may want to create curiosity with posters saying, "Will you be part of a class act?" or a similar slogan that will capture students' interest. As the drive gets closer, give more information.

Depending on what type of drive you conduct, publicity in your school should start about two weeks prior to the drive. Public service announcements in your local paper or on the radio will need to be submitted earlier.

Your most intense publicity in the school will naturally happen the week before the drive. Your goal is to make sure that all eligible students know that they should register, when, and where. Some publicity ideas:

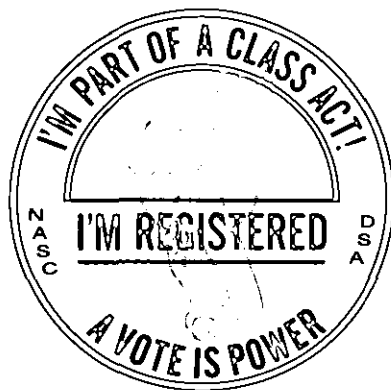
- Make student PA broadcasts. (See P.R. kit for script ideas.)
- Have public service announcements over the PA system. (See kit.)
- Submit press releases to local papers. (See kit.)
- Display posters—utilize the ones in the kit as well as your own student-made posters.
- Create sandwich boards from posters to publicize registration events.

- Contact the mayor's office with a request that the mayor proclaim National Student Leadership Week and the Voter Registration Drive. (See kit for sample proclamation.)
- Ask teachers to announce the drive in class. When possible, coordinate the drive and publicity efforts with the social studies curriculum in junior and senior courses.

### ☐ How Can We Motivate Students To Register?

The use of creative incentives will be effective in motivating students to register. Do some brainstorming and come up with some unique ideas. Here are some suggestions:

- Student councils can take on the Registration Drive as a student leadership project.
- Order "I'M PART OF A CLASS ACT. I'M REGISTERED" stickers from NASSP. (See order blank in kit.) Give one to each student who registers as one more way to spread the word to those who haven't registered yet.



- Give each registrant a wallet-sized Registration ID card when they register. (See the P.R. kit for sample to reproduce.) The ID card could make registrants eligible for a school activity or privilege such as "dress down" day.



- **LIGHT THE TORCH FOR '88!** See the Public Relations Booklet for a reproducible example and instructions for making the torch poster to be displayed in the registration area to graph the percent of students registering.
- List and post the names of students registering, or have them sign the poster. Recognize these students for taking this step toward responsible citizenship.
- **GO FOR THE GOLD.** Aim for 100 percent registration of eligible students! Send NASSP the percentage you achieve on your feedback sheet to qualify for an 8½" x 11" framable certificate for your school. The document will be sealed with a gold seal for schools with 90 percent-100 percent; with a silver seal for 80 percent-89 percent; and with a bronze seal for 70 percent-79 percent registration of eligible students. If your school participates but doesn't reach the 70 percent level, you will still receive the certificate when you mail in your feedback sheet. (See P.R. Booklet.)
- Order "VOTE POWER" buttons and shirts from the Vote America Foundation. (See order blank in kit.)
- Organize competitions between classrooms or with other area high schools. Issue a friendly challenge to another high school to "Go for the Gold."
- Present each student with a certificate at graduation or asterisk names of registered graduates on the graduation program.

#### **How Should Local Election Officials Be Involved?**

- Inform them of the drive as soon as possible.
- Keep them up to date on your plans.
- If your state allows, arrange for training for student or other volunteer registrars.
- Request that official registrars be made available for a school program if desired and for school registration if required.

- Notify registrars when you will need voter registration and absentee ballot application forms with instructions. At the conclusion of the drive, you will return registration forms to them.

#### **What Type of Drive Should We Conduct?**

Whichever format is selected, students will need to know:

- Social Security number
- Date and place of birth
- Date of move to present address

They should use their formal names in filling out registration forms.

#### **A. Assembly or Senior/Junior Class Meeting**

Plan a stimulating program for your assembly or class meeting during the school day. Other eligible students should be invited to attend. You could have a debate on current issues (with both sides represented) with guest participants—possibly local candidates or the school debate team. Invite a faculty member or outside speaker to discuss the importance of young people registering and voting and to explain the process. Use interesting audiovisual materials. A short presentation could be combined with a concert or film. Some program ideas:

- School debate on current issues or candidates
- Elected officials or candidates (remember to keep it nonpartisan!)
- Representative of the League of Women Voters or election board member
- Respected student leader, athlete, coach, or faculty member.

The committee should plan the time frame for the program. Keep it brief and motivating, but be sure to allow time for questions and answers. If an assembly program is featured, registration forms could be passed out by the committee in the auditorium with instructions given to the entire group, if legal in your state. It is helpful to use an overhead projector to display a registration form so that the correct way to complete the form can be demonstrated.

Registration in an assembly or class meeting reaches the largest number of students with the fewest number of volunteers required. Some schools may prefer to set up tables in the hallway or cafeteria after the program to conduct the actual registration. This permits registration on a more personal basis.

### B. Classroom Registration:

If the drive is to be held in classrooms (homeroom, social studies or English classrooms), the cooperation of the teacher in charge is essential.

Some of the most effective drives in the past have been held in social studies classes, led by a teacher, committee member, trained volunteer, election official, or member of the League of Women Voters. They, at the minimum, distribute the registration forms, explain how to fill them out, check them over, and collect them. Ideally, an entire class period would be devoted to the process, with challenging, informative material presented to the students and followed by discussion and questions. (See the October 1987, December 1987, and January 1988 issues of *Student Activities* magazine for examples of classroom drives.)

Holding the drive in a classroom takes time from classwork and requires more volunteer time, but is a more personal approach to the process and reaches more students.

The required social studies/civics curriculum for juniors and/or seniors should

cover the electoral process and provide a background for the expectation that students will register and vote when eligible.

### C. Tables or Booths:

The registration forms can be filled out at tables or booths set up in hallways or the cafeteria after the assembly or class meeting or during lunch.

Some schools may prefer to conduct the entire drive at tables or booths. Tables can be manned for several days or a week, and possibly set up in different locations.

The tables should be manned by one or two trained volunteers, a deputized registrar (or official registrar if required), equipped with registration forms, pens, etc. Other committee members can guide eligible students to the table.

The area around the registration table is the place to concentrate an attractive display of the posters and other material included in the kit and student-made campaign material.

### D. Central Site:

In states where registrants are required to register in person at a central site, the assembly or classroom programs would be followed up by having the eligible students go to the central site.



### Registration Day

The day (or week) you've been planning for has finally arrived! The following checklist will help you finalize those last-minute details.

1. Are your volunteer workers aware of when they work and what their responsibilities are?
2. Do you have an ample supply of registration forms, pens, and sheets to record registrants' names?
3. Do you have stickers, registration ID cards, or other incentive items ready?
4. Is the "torch" poster hanging and ready to be filled in? Determine who is responsible for this task.
5. Do you have copies of the list of students who are eligible to register available for volunteers?
6. Who is responsible for checking the registration forms for accuracy and turning them in to the appropriate office?
7. Do you have information available on absentee voting and on polling places in your area? This is important information for the newly registered voter.

### 5 Follow Up

- Calculate the percentage of eligible students registering before graduation day. Be sure to include those registered in your school drive and those who had previously registered elsewhere.
- Maintain a record of students who are registered. Submit a copy to your principal. Plan to have these students recognized in some way.
- Fill out the two feedback sheets and return them to the NASSP Division of Student Activities office as soon as possible. Both feedback sheets are located in the back of the PR Booklet. One is regarding the PR material and the other is regarding your drive; its completion and return qualifies your school to receive the registration certificate.
- Remember to thank all those who helped with the registration drive: committee members, advisers, faculty members, principal, speakers, election board, League of Women Voters, local radio stations, newspaper, etc.
- Make a file to keep for future reference. In the file, include all notes and information about your drive, names of contacts, problems you encountered with suggestions for improvement, aspects that went particularly well, list of committee members etc.

- Brainstorm ways to encourage students to vote in the primaries and election.
- As a committee, evaluate your drive. Assess what went well, where you could improve, things you'd change if you were to do it again, etc. Include your evaluation in the file you've made.
- Congratulate and appreciate your committee and volunteers for a job well done! Have a wrap-up pizza party to celebrate the important role you played in the democratic process!

## **Congratulations and thank you!**

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Congratulations on successfully organizing and implementing a student voter registration drive in your school. Because of you, many students will now be able to voice their opinion by the power of their vote. This is indeed a privilege, and you have helped make it happen!

*If you need assistance on your school's drive, you may contact:*

Shirley Olson, Coordinator  
"Register 88-Make It a Class Act"  
NASSP  
1904 Association Drive  
Reston, Va. 22091  
703-860-0200

## More questions?

### Refer to the following national organizations for help with student voter registration

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**Committee for the Study of the American Electorate**

421 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
Curtis B. Gans, Director

**Democratic National Committee**

1625 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**League of Women Voters of the United States**

1730 M St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
Marlene Cohn,  
Elections Service Specialist

**NAACP**

4805 Mt. Hope Dr.  
Baltimore, Md. 21215  
John J. Johnson  
Voter Education Department

**National Association of Secondary School Principals**

**Division of Student Activities**

1904 Association Dr.  
Reston, Va. 22091  
Dale Hawley, Director  
Rocco Marano, Assistant Director  
Anne Hupfer, Administrative Assistant

**National Association of Student Councils**

1904 Association Dr.  
Reston, Va. 22091

**National Clearinghouse on Election Administration**

Federal Election Commission  
999 E St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20463  
Janet McKee,  
Management Assistant

**National Council for the Social Studies**

3501 Newark St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20016  
Frances Haley

**Republican National Committee**

310 First St., SE  
Washington, D.C. 20003

**Vote America Foundation**

1100 Fifteenth St., NW  
Suite 2210  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Patricia M. Frierson  
Executive Vice President



1904 Association Drive  
Reston, Virginia 22091-1598

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS



DIVISION OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES



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1904 Association Drive  
Reston, Virginia 22091-1598

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS  
1904 Association Drive  
Reston, Virginia 22091-1598  
703/441-3500  
FAX 703/441-3501  
WWW.NASSP.ORG  
DIVISION OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES