WHO'S VOTING ON YOUR ISSUES?



MARCH 18, 2016 CURRICULUM GUIDE

Student Voter Registration Day (SVRD) 2016 is a single-day program that educates New York City students about the importance of voting and civic engagement. The program is designed to increase youth voter registration and to get young people excited about being involved in the democratic

process. Through interactive discussion, SVRD encourages youth to see how issues at the polls affect their everyday lives.













"Bad officials are the ones elected by good citizens who do not vote."

-George Jean Nathan

Acknowledgments

SVRD PLANNING COALITION

New York City Council, led by Council Member Helen Rosenthal NYC Votes/New York City Campaign Finance Board New York Immigration Coalition New York City Department of Education New York City Board of Elections

COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERS

Arab American Association of New York Latino Leadership Institute Atlas: DIY **BridgeRoots** Brooklyn NAACP Chhaya CDC Chinese Progressive Association Christopher Rose Community Empowerment Campaign, Inc. (CRCEC) Center for the Integration and Advancement of New Americans (CIANA) Citizen Action of New York Citizens Union Common Cause/NY Dominicanos USA Empowerment Zone Inc. Friends of Art and Design High School Generation Citizen Good Old Lower East Side, Inc. The Black Institute Haitian American United for Progress, Inc. Immigrant Action Indo-Caribbean Alliance Jack and Jill of America, Inc. Latin Women in Action, Inc.

League of Women Voters of the City of New York MinKwon Center for Community Action NAACP Mid-Manhattan Branch New York Immigration Coalition New York Public Interest Research Group Fund, Inc. (NYPIRG) Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition NYU Lutheran Family Health Centers **Omega Phi Beta Foundation** PALANTE Harlem Inc. Pearls and Ivy Foundation of Queens, Inc. Phipps Neighborhoods, Inc. SCO Family of Services/Center for Family Life South Asians for Empowerment (SAFE) Staten Island Community Job Center Street Corner Resources The Gathering for Justice The Greater Ridgewood Youth Council United Chinese Association of Brooklyn Inc. University Settlement Society of New York Women's City Club of New York

For any questions about the curriculum, please contact Eric Contreras, Executive Director of Social Studies for the New York City Department of Education.

Contents

Acknowledgments
Introduction
How to Use This Curriculum
Materials
Voter FAQ16
Voter Vocabulary
Elected Officials: Responsibilities and Duties
Which Elected Official Do I Need For My Issue? 23
How Do I Contact My Elected Officials?
Voting Rights: Major Dates in History 24
Absentee Ballot Application
Poll Worker Application
Introduction to DACA
DAPA (Deferred Action for Parental Accountability)
New York City Council Participatory Budgeting
Guide to the New York State Registration Form
Process for Submitting Registration Forms
Helpful Links
Stay Connected

Introduction

Student Voter Registration Day (SVRD) is a nonpartisan youth voter program designed to educate students about the importance of voting and civic engagement. SVRD provides avenues for high school youth who are both citizens and non-citizens on how to become civically engaged in their communities. While voting is very important, SVRD helps inform students on the full scope of civic engagement, where processes such as Youth Council, Participatory Budgeting, and Community Board membership are all important to help build stronger communities. Youth are needed at every process to ensure their voices, issues, and concerns are heard and that they can help develop solutions for the greater good of the community as a whole. Particularly, civic engagement is a process both inside and outside the ballot box, and there are critical roles for all New Yorkers to play regardless of immigration status.

SVRD is the product of a partnership between the City Council, led by the office of City Council Member Helen Rosenthal, the NYC Campaign Finance Board, and the NYC Department of Education (DOE).

This curriculum offers a 45–60 minute condensed version of the Civic Engagement curriculum that has been implemented by the DOE in NYC high schools. It provides an opportunity for youth to learn about the process of voting and to register to vote while still in school.

This SVRD curriculum will help youth explore the issues that are most important to young voters, and challenge them to think critically about how these issues are dealt with at the public policy level.

How to Use This Curriculum

This lesson is divided into eight activities: "Welcome," "Exploring Your Relationship to Government," "So Why Does Voting Matter?," "Why Are Young People Not Voting?," "Becoming Civically Engaged," "Elections & Registration," "Trivia Recap," and "Registering Students to Vote and What to Expect Now." These units are arranged sequentially. Each contains discussion questions designed to help students think critically about the issues that are most important to young people, and how these issues translate to public policy. The workshop includes interactive discussion, a visual presentation, and a summarizing trivia game.

Part 1: Welcome

Icebreaker

• One student is selected to read aloud the quote from the presentation (on page 1), then additional students are called on to interpret the quote.

★ Introductions

- Facilitator Introduction
- Today is Student Voter Registration Day!
 - » What is SVRD?
- Partners involved: New York City Campaign Finance Board/NYC Votes, New York City Council, led by Council Member Helen Rosenthal, New York Immigration Coalition, New York City Department of Education, New York City Board of Elections.

Part 2: Exploring Your Relationship to Government

In this segment, the facilitator will pose three questions for students to consider about themselves to help them better understand the framework of the discussion and the function of government:

- Who are you?
- What is your role and responsibility?
- What issues are important to you?

Circles of Life

Students will examine the life circles that they are currently part of (family, friends, school, community, government, you) and how their interaction with each circle may begin to change as they move towards young adulthood.

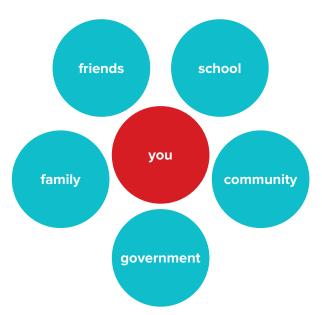
★ Task:

- On a scale from 0%–100%, rate how much power you have in these circles.
- ★ Questions to pose:
 - What sequence of circles best describes your life right now as a high school student?
 - How will this sequence change during freshman year of college? Why?
 - Which circles will you interact with more? Less? Why?
 - How many of you right now have government IDs (ex: permit, driver's license, state ID, municipal ID)?
 - How will your interaction with government change as you move into young adulthood?
 - What role does voting and/or advocacy play in these circles?

Part 3: So Why Does Voting Matter?

What is voting?

Voting is a means for citizens to choose their elected representatives. Voting empowers individuals and communities to register their approval or disapproval for the state of current political and community affairs.



Voting Rights History

A brief overview of the history of voting in the United States covering the 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments:

- Before the changes to the Constitution, voting rights and eligibility were defined by each state. Most states allowed only Caucasian males—who either owned property or had taxable incomes to vote.
- From 1776 to 1926, 40 states and federal territories permitted non-citizens to vote in local, state, and even federal elections. Non-citizens also held public office, such as alderman, coroner, and school board member
- 14th Amendment, 1868: All persons born or naturalized are citizens of the United States and the state where they reside. All U.S. citizens are guaranteed equal protection under the law.
- 15th Amendment, 1870: All men, irrespective of race, color, or previous servitude, are granted the right to vote.
- 19th Amendment, 1920: Women are granted the right to vote.
- 24th Amendment, 1964: Prohibited poll taxes for voters in federal elections.
- 26th Amendment, 1976: 18-year-olds are granted the right to vote.
- Voting Rights Act, 1965: Act that aimed to overcome legal barriers at the state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote under the 15th Amendment.
 - » Types of discriminatory barriers: poll taxes, grandfather clauses, literacy tests, social status.
 - » Shelby County v. Holder, 2013: The result of this Supreme Court case was the striking down, on constitutional grounds, of a section of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that required state and local governments to submit proposed changes to their voting procedures to the U.S. Department of Justice. Since Shelby County v. Holder, many state laws have gone into effect that make it more difficult to vote, including:
 - Requiring voters to show a government-issued ID to prove their identity
 - Reducing early voting
 - Purging of voter rolls
 - Moving polling sites out of some neighborhoods

★ Questions to pose to students:

- Who is eligible to vote in America?
- What is the significance of the 26th amendment as it pertains to youth and young adults?
- What were some of the recent changes made to the Voting Rights Act?
 - » What impact might these changes have in the future?
- How old does someone need to be to vote?

Activity

• Each student in the room guesses a number from 1–50 on how New York State turned out in the 2014 midterm elections. (1 being the best turnout, and 50 being the worst turnout.) The student who guesses 46th, or closest to it, gets a wristband/candy.

Statistics

Students are provided with a breakdown of New York State, New York City, and national voting statistics.

- In the 2013 mayoral election, the youth voter turnout was 11%.
- In the 2014 midterm elections, national youth voter turnout was 20%.
- In 2014, New York State ranked 46th out of 50 states in total voter turnout.

What do these statistics tell us about young people and voter participation?

Questions to pose:

- What are some of the reasons why young people don't vote?
- How do these statistics impact policy around youth issues?
- How do groups benefit when they vote?
- What are the issues that excite young people?

lssues

We will examine the key issues impacting NYC youth, and discuss how these issues affect the students' lives, and the lives of their family members, and their local communities.

As a collective group, the students will identify the 5–6 most important issues from the list, then participate in an interactive discussion about how these issues will impact their lives. The teacher/facilitator should have a white board or notepad and markers handy to record the students' contributions.

- Key issues to address include: minimum wage, public transportation, affordable housing, financial aid/student loans, food
- Scenario: You are an 18-year-old CUNY student who is working full-time, attending school full-time, and living off campus. What are the life costs that you will need to consider for living in NYC?
- The facilitator will go through each issue individually, writing the issue on the board in one column and the cost associated with the issue in the next column. While going through each issue, discuss how the issue is connected to an elected official, and to voting. The teacher should begin with financial aid/student loans (listed below) as this will provide the framework for the other costs associated with young adulthood. The cost associated with each issue should then be subtracted from the annual salary provided by the minimum wage.

Introductory Issue: Financial Aid/Student Loans

Note to Teachers: This issue is included to begin the dialogue with the students about how the costs associated with each issue have a direct correlation with voting.

- Questions to pose:
 - » Why is financial aid important for college-age youth?
 - » What is the current tuition for CUNY?
 - Answer: \$6,330 per year for NYC residents.
 - » Who is eligible for financial aid?
 - Answer: U.S. citizens and permanent residents.

- » How does financial aid relate to government?
 - Answer: Federal and state financial aid is provided by the United States government to need-based students in the form of grants, work-study, and student loans.
- » How does CUNY receive its funding?
 - Answer: It is a state-funded institution.
- » What is the average student loan debt?
 - Answer: \$35,000 as of 2015.
- ★ Issue #1: Minimum Wage
 - Questions to pose:
 - » What is the current minimum wage in New York?
 - Answer: \$9.00/hour.
 - » What is it expected to increase to?
 - Answer: Governor Cuomo has submitted a proposal to raise the minimum wage to \$11.50/hour in NYC and \$10.50 per hour in the rest of the state. The minimum wage is set at the city, state, and federal level.
 - » What is the role of the New York State governor?
 - Answer: The governor can propose legislation, and submits a budget to the Legislature. The governor can veto bills passed by the Legislature, and has the power of "line-item" veto on appropriations bills.
 - » What is the role of the New York State Legislature?
 - Answer: There are two houses of the Legislature, the Assembly and the Senate. A bill
 passed by both houses may become law, if it is signed by the <u>governor</u>. A veto may be
 overridden if there is a <u>two-thirds majority</u> in each house. Furthermore, it has the power
 to propose amendments to the <u>New York State Constitution</u>, which must be is passed by
 majority vote in two successive sessions. If so proposed the amendment becomes valid if
 agreed to by the voters of a <u>referendum</u>.
 - » What are taxes and why do people pay them?
 - Answer: Your tax money goes to many places including paying the salaries of government workers, as well as towards common resources such as police, firefighters, maintaining roads, and funding government programs such as CUNY.

- » Discussion Question: How might voting change the minimum wage?
- » For the issue of minimum wage, the facilitator should write on the board the current minimum wage (\$9.00/hour), and how much someone who is working full time (40 hours per week) would make in a year (\$18,720). Then subtract \$6,045 for taxes, for a total of \$12,675. The total income per month would be \$1,056.25.
 - Breakdown of taxes: 28.55% (Does not have to be shared with students)
 - ✓ Social Security: 6.2%=\$1,160.64
 - ✓ Medicare: 1.45%= \$271.44
 - ✓ Federal: 15%= \$2,346.75
 - ✓ State: 6.45%= \$1,679.61
 - ✓ City: \$587

★ Issue #2: Public Transportation

- Questions to pose:
 - » How do we vote on an issue like public transportation?
 - » What is the current MetroCard fee? Monthly MetroCard fee?
 - Answer: \$2.75 base fare and \$116.50 monthly
 - » Which elected official oversees the MTA?
 - Answer: The governor appoints the chairman and vice chairman of the MTA, so he has the most direct influence on how it operates. Any changes to the funding would go through the budget process—proposed by the governor, passed by the Legislature.
 - » Why do the fares increase?
 - Answer: Fares increase when the MTA doesn't get enough state subsidies to support the system, so the public has to pay for the deficit.
 - » How might voting change these fees?
 - Answer: Voting for elected officials who are committed to finding ways to keep the fares low.

★ Issue #3: Affordable Housing

- Questions to pose:
 - » What is the average rent in NYC?
 - Answer: As of October 2015, the median rent is \$3,391/month in Manhattan, \$2,883/month in Brooklyn, and \$2,568/month in Queens.*

(For the purpose of this exercise, let's say you rent an apartment with 3 people, and your rent is \$1,000 a month.)

* http://therealdeal.com/2015/11/13/will-it-ever-end-manhattan-median-rent-now-3391

- » Why is affordable housing an issue in NYC?
- » What is considered to be affordable housing?
 - Answer: Housing deemed affordable to those with a median household income as rated by country, state, region or municipality.
- » How does the City Council create and sustain affordable housing?
 - Answer: The City Council can fund programs to offer legal services to tenants facing eviction in housing court, change the City's zoning code to encourage more construction of affordable housing, and pass laws to limit tenant harassment.

★ Issue #4: Food

- Questions to pose:
 - » On average, how much does a college student spend on food?
 - (For the purpose of this exercise, let's say it is \$100 per month.)
 - » How do we vote on an issue like food?
 - » What is a food desert?
 - Answer: A geographic area where affordable and nutritious food is difficult to obtain.
 - » Which elected officials might be responsible for healthy food options within a community?
 - Answer: Senators, Assembly members, City Council members, Community Boards

At the end of this segment, the students will have an understanding of how the key issues impacting youth and young adults are directly related to voting and government, and how these issues affect their monthly incomes. Example: After taxes, housing, transportation, and food, students may have no money left over and would be in debt.

• Breakdown:

\$1,056.25 (monthly income)

- -\$1,000.00 (rent)
- -\$116.50 (transportation)

-\$100.00 (food)

\$-160.25

Before casting your vote on these issues, what questions would you ask the candidates in order to inform your vote?

Part 4: Why Are Young People Not Voting?

- ★ Top 3 reasons according to your peers:
 - Apathy: feeling that your vote does not matter
 - Lack of education about voting and elections
 - Mistrust in government

Discussion

- Which policies won't get sufficient priority without the votes or advocacy of young people?
- What are some ways to change this trend?
- What are some things from each of the life circles that students can do to change this trend?
- What are some reasons to vote?
 - So you can make decisions for yourself. If you don't vote, someone else will.
 - Because politicians are listening! They know who votes, and they focus their attention on those people.
 - It is your right!
 - To have politicians in office who represent your needs and concerns.
 - To have money put towards the issues you care about.
 - It's your money on the line.
 - Your issues and your communities matter.
 - You can make a big difference in close elections.

Part 5: Elections & Registration

- ★ Election year at a glance
 - In this segment, it is emphasized that *every* year is an election year in New York. Students will be provided with an overview of:
 - » The 2016 elections
 - Positions:
 - ✓ President/Vice President
 - ✓ U.S. Congress: Senate, House of Representatives
 - ✓ State Legislature: Senate, Assembly

What are the roles and salaries of these positions?¹

- Dates:
 - ✓ April 19th: Presidential Primary
 - ✓ June 28th: Congressional Primary
 - ✓ September 13th: State/Local Primary
 - ✓ November 8th: General Election
- » The 2017 elections
 - Positions:
 - √ Mayor
 - ✓ Comptroller
 - ✓ Public Advocate
 - ✓ Borough President
 - ✓ Council Members

★ Registering to Vote

- Eligible students will have the opportunity to register to vote. This segment will also include a discussion about:
 - » Who can register?
 - Answer: U.S. Citizens, age 17 and older
 - » What does this mean for people who are not U.S. citizens yet?
 - Answer: People who are not eligible to register to vote due to their citizenship status are encouraged to find city, state, or national issues for which they can advocate.

¹ See page 18 for Elected Officials: Responsibilities and Duties.

Part 6: Becoming Civically Engaged

- Get the NYC ID
 - » IDNYC is a government-issued identification card for all residents of New York City who are at least 14 years of age. Any resident of NYC may apply, regardless of immigration status, as long as they provide proof that they reside in New York City. It is free, and provides many benefits, including acting as a library card; a free membership to NYC's museums, zoos, and more; and discounts on a variety of activities, from movie tickets to gyms to supermarkets.
- Getting involved
 - » In this segment, we will review other ways students can get involved in their communities.
 - Join your local community board (16 and 17-year-olds can now become members).
 - Become a poll worker (if you are a registered voter or 17).
 - Join a political group.
 - Contact your local elected officials about issues in your neighborhood.
 - Vote by absentee ballot.
 - Vote on how to distribute public funds (if you live in a district with participatory budgeting).
- Introduction to DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) for non-citizen students.
 - » What is DACA and who is eligible?
 - » What does it help with? (Provides information on applying for financial aid, the types of aid that are available, and free legal advice.)
 - » Where can I get more information? (Both students and teachers will be provided with a DACA Fact Sheet and contact resources upon request after the workshop.)

Part 7: Trivia Recap

A fun and incentivized recap of the information discussed in the workshop.

- ★ Trivia Questions
- Q Who is the current United States vice president?
- A Joe Biden
- Q What was New York State's 2014 rank in voter turnout?
- A 46th
- Q What percentage of youth voted in the 2013 mayoral election?
- A 11%
- **Q** What are three ways youth can become civically engaged other than voting?
- A 1) Join a political campaign
 - 2) Email their city, state, or federal elected official
 - 3) Join a local community board
- **Q** How old must a person be to register to vote?
- A Age 17
- **Q** Who is the current police commissioner?
- A Bill Bratton
- **Q** What is the current minimum wage?
- A \$9.00/hour
- **Q** What year were women given the right to vote?
- **A** 1920
- **Q** How often are presidential elections?
- A Every four years
- Q How long is a United States senate term?
- A Six years
- **Q** How many terms can a president serve?
- A Two terms
- **Q** Which amendment gave African Americans the right to vote?
- A 15th amendment
- **Q** What is the role of the electoral college?
- **A** To formally cast votes for the president and vice president
- **Q** Who is the 44th president of the United States?
- A Barack Obama

Part 8: Registering Students to Vote and What to Expect Now

- Facilitator takes questions from students.
- Facilitator distributes voter registration forms, then goes through each question with the students using the annotated Guide to the New York State Registration Form.² Collect and review the forms from the students before they exit the room.
- Resources:
 - For Educators: Teachers/Faculty will be provided with voter registration forms (to continue registering students post SVRD), Voter FAQ and Vocabulary, and the process for submitting forms. They will also be emailed after SVRD to complete a short survey about the day, as well as rate the components of the lesson, resources, and takeaways for the students.
 - For Students: Facilitators should inform students that they will receive a confirmation in the mail with their poll sites in 3–6 weeks from the Board of Elections. In participating districts, students will receive Participatory Budgeting Voter Guides. Facilitators should have printed hand-outs of DACA flyers available to students as they exit the room, as well as a stack of the NYC Votes postcards.

² See pages 32-33.

Materials

Within this package, please find additional resources that may be used to complement the lesson. These resources include:

- Voter FAQ
- Voter Vocabulary
- Elected Officials: Responsibilities & Duties
- Voting Rights: Major Dates in History
- Absentee ballot application
- Poll worker application
- Introduction to DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)
- DAPA (Deferred Action for Parental Accountability)
- Introduction to Participatory Budgeting
- Guide to the New York State Voter Registration Form
- Submitting registration forms to NYC Votes

VOTER FAQ

- Q How old do I need to be to register to vote?
- A You must be 17 to register, and turn 18 by the end of the year. You must be 18 years old to vote.
- Q What is the difference between primary and general elections?
- **A** A primary election determines which candidates from each party will be on the ballot, and the general election determines which candidates get elected into office.
- **Q** What elections can I vote in?
- *A* If you are registered to a political party, you can vote in any primary or runoff election. Anyone can vote in the general election.
- Q Where do I go to vote on Election Day?
- A Click here to find your poll site location. (http://nyc.pollsitelocator.com/)
- **Q** I am a permanent resident. Can I still register to vote?
- **A** No. You can only vote if you are a United States citizen.
- Q Should I register to vote if I don't know my citizenship status?
- **A** You should only register to vote if you are sure of your citizenship status.
- Q I don't know if I'm registered to vote—how can I find out?
- *A* Use the <u>Voter Registration look-up</u> website (<u>https://voterlookup.elections.state.ny.us/</u>) to check your registration status online, or call the voter hotline for assistance. (212-868-3692)

Q What happens if I move out of the country or go away to school?

- A You can still vote by <u>absentee ballot (http://vote.nyc.ny.us/downloads/pdf/forms/boe/absenteevoting/</u> <u>absenglish.pdf</u>). Call in to the Board of Elections to ask one to be sent to you, or fill out the form, print, and mail it in to the Board of Elections.
- Q I was previously convicted of a felony. Can I register to vote?
- **A** If you were convicted of a felony, you cannot register to vote or vote until you have completed your prison sentence and are no longer on parole.
- Q I was previously convicted of a misdemeanor. Can I register to vote?
- *A* Yes. Misdemeanor and violation convictions do not bar you from voting, even if you are, or have served time in jail for the misdemeanor.

Q I am a student. Can I register to vote at my school address?

A Yes! You have the right to register to vote at your school address—this includes a dorm room. Any student living in a dorm is entitled to the same rights as any other student. To imply otherwise is illegal. If you receive mail in a P.O. box you can sign an affidavit (or, in some cases, get a letter from your college's Residential Life office) asserting that you live at your dorm address.

Q I am currently homeless, can I register and vote?

A Yes, you have the right to vote. Write a location where you can be found, such as "Bench on Central Park on 86th Street," as the address where you live. Write the address of a shelter, a P.O. box, or family member's address as the address where you receive mail. Your voter card will be sent to this address and you will be assigned a poll site according to the address where you live.

Q Do I need to re-register every time I move?

A Yes. For each time you move, you will likely have a new poll site address, depending on the location.

Q What happens if I get to my poll site and I am not listed?

A First, make sure you are signing in at the correct table for your assembly and election district. Once you confirm this, and you believe you are eligible to vote, you can still vote by filling out an affidavit/ provisional ballot, and follow the instructions. After the election, the BOE will check its records, and your vote will be counted if you were eligible to vote. If not, you will receive a notice that you were not eligible to vote, and you should fill out a new registration form for future elections.

Q Does my voter registration ever expire?

A Your registration has no expiration date, but it may be moved to inactive if you did not vote in the last two federal elections, or if you moved and did not update your address with the <u>BOE</u>.

Q I recently changed my legal name. How do I change my name on my voter registration form?

A To change your name, address, political party, or email, fill out a new <u>registration form</u> and send it in to your local Board of Elections office. (<u>http://vote.nyc.ny.us/downloads/pdf/forms/boe/voterreg/voterreg/voterregenglish.pdf</u>)

Q Which political party should I select?

A As a nonpartisan initiative, we are not allowed to tell you which party to select. To learn more about the political parties in New York State, click <u>here (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_New_York</u>). In order to vote in a primary election, you must be registered in New York State with the party whose primary you would like to participate in.

Q Do I need to show identification to vote? If so, what type?

- A Yes. You must provide either a valid DMV identification number (driver's license or non-driver ID) or the last four digits of your social security number on your voter registration form. If you don't have one of these forms of ID, then you should bring a valid photo ID and one of the following forms of identification to your poll site on Election Day: a copy of a current utility bill, a bank statement, a paycheck, a government check, or some other government document that shows your name and address.
- Q On Election Day, if I think my rights have been violated, what should I do?
- *A* Call (866) OUR-VOTE if you feel your rights have been violated. There will be lawyers on hand to answer Election Day questions and concerns about voting procedures.
- **Q** Where can I learn more about the elections: political parties, who's running for office, issues, and voting rights laws?
- **A** Check out <u>Project Vote Smart (www.votesmart.org</u>) to learn more about the election process, who is running for office in your community, and what issues matter this cycle.

Q What happens after I register to vote?

A After you register, you will receive a confirmation in the mail from the Board of Elections within 2–3 weeks that will include your poll site, and voter card. Use this information to vote on Election Day.

VOTER VOCABULARY

Absentee Ballot

A way people can vote when they can't make it to their polling place. They vote on a special ballot and mail it in. In order to vote absentee, you must request and mail in the ballot so that it arrives 7 days before the date of the election.

Affidavit/Provisional Ballot

An affidavit/provisional ballot is used to record a vote when there are questions about a given voter's eligibility. A provisional ballot would be cast when: The voter refuses to show a photo ID (in regions that require one), or the voter's name does not appear on the electoral roll for the given poll site.

Assembly District

A political subdivision that elects a member of the State Assembly.

Ballot Proposal

A ballot proposal is a question placed on the ballot for voters to decide. Ballot questions may involve bond issues, or proposed amendments to the New York State Constitution or the New York City Charter. In some cases, an individual or group submits a petition to place a question on the ballot.

Candidate

A person who is seeking an office through an election.

General Election

A regular election of candidates for office for city, statewide, or national offices.

Electoral College

A body of "electors" chosen by popular vote on a state-by-state basis, who formally elect the president and vice president of the United States.

Election District

The basic political subdivision for purposes of registration and voting. By New York State law, there are no more than 950 registered voters in an election district.

Gerrymandering

To manipulate the boundaries of an electoral constituency so as to favor one party or class.

Nonpartisan

Not biased or partisan, especially toward any particular political group.

Participatory Budgeting

A democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget. In other words, the people who pay taxes decide how tax dollars get spent.

Partisan

A strong supporter of a party, cause, or person.

Petition

A formally-drawn request, often bearing the names of a number of those making the request, that is addressed to a person or group of persons in authority or power, soliciting some favor, right, mercy, or other benefit.

Political Party

An organized group of people with similar political aims and opinions that seeks to influence public policy by getting candidates elected to public office.

Poll Site

A place where votes are cast.

Poll Worker

A person who is responsible for operating the polls including opening the poll site, serving voters, and closing the polls. The poll worker can serve as an inspector, poll clerk, information clerk, door clerk, or interpreter.

Primary Election

An election at which enrolled members of a party vote to nominate party candidates and elect party officers.

ELECTED OFFICIALS: RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

CITY OFFICIALS

Mayor

The mayor is the chief executive officer of the City of New York. The mayor appoints most heads of city agencies, boards and commissions, at times pursuant to the advice and consent of the City Council. The mayor is responsible for the effectiveness and integrity of city government operations, proposes the city budget, and has the power to approve or veto all bills proposed by the City Council. The mayor is elected every four years. *Salary: \$258,750*.

Comptroller

The city comptroller is the chief fiscal officer of the City of New York. The comptroller audits city agencies, advises the mayor and the City Council of the financial condition of the city, and may make recommendations, comments, and criticisms concerning the operations, fiscal policies and financial transactions of the city. The comptroller is elected every four years in the same election as the mayor. *Salary:* \$209,050.

Public Advocate

The public advocate monitors the operation of the public information and service complaint programs of city agencies. The public advocate receives and responds to complaints of a recurring and multi-borough or citywide nature. The public advocate may also hold public hearings on any of the matters within his or her jurisdiction and duties. The public advocate participates in the discussions of the City Council but is not a voting member. The public advocate is elected every four years in the same election as the mayor. *Salary:* \$184,800.

Borough President

The borough presidents have the power to work with the mayor and other city officials in the interest of people of the boroughs. Generally, the borough presidents appoint members of the community boards and work to promote the long-term welfare of the boroughs. To be eligible to serve as borough president, an individual must be a resident of the borough for which he or she is elected. The borough president is elected every four years in the same election as the mayor. *Salary: \$179,200*.

City Council Member

The City Council is the legislative branch of the City of New York. Generally, the Council has the power to propose and adopt local laws, investigate matters related to the property, affairs, and government of the city, and approve the city budget. There are 51 members of the City Council. City Council members are elected every four years. *Salary: \$148,500; Salary for Speaker of the New York City Council: \$164,500*

District Attorney

The five district attorneys in the City of New York protect the public by investigating and prosecuting criminal conduct in the counties in which they hold office. They are elected every four years. *Salary: \$212,800.*

STATE OFFICIALS

Governor

The governor is the chief executive of the State of New York. The governor may approve or veto laws, convene the legislature on extraordinary occasions, and grant reprieves, commutations and pardons after conviction. The governor is elected every four years. *Salary:* \$179,000.

Lieutenant Governor

The lieutenant governor is elected in the same election as the governor. The lieutenant governor is first in line of succession to the governor. The lieutenant governor is also the president of the Senate, but has a casting vote only. *Salary:* \$151,500.

Attorney General

The attorney general is the chief legal officer of the State of New York and is the head of the Law Department. The attorney general prosecutes and defends all legal actions and proceedings in which the state is interested. The attorney general is elected every four years in the same election as the Governor. *Salary: \$151,500.*

Comptroller

The state comptroller is the head of the Department of Audit and Control of the State of New York. The comptroller is required to audit payments made by the state and all official accounts of the state. The comptroller is elected at the same time as the governor and holds office for four years. *Salary: \$151,500*.

State Senator*

The State Senate is one of the two houses of the New York State Legislature. The Senate proposes and passes bills, which, if also passed by the Assembly, are presented to the governor for approval. At this time there are 62 state senators. Senators must be residents of the senate districts which they are chosen to represent for at least twelve months at the time of election, and are elected every two years. *Salary:* \$79,500.

State Assembly Member*

The Assembly is one of the two houses of the New York State Legislature. The Assembly proposes and passes bills, which, if also passed by the Senate, are presented to the governor for approval. The New York State Constitution provides for 150 Assembly members. Assembly members must be residents of the assembly districts from which they are chosen to represent for at least twelve months at the time of election, and are elected every two years. *Salary: \$79,500*.

^{*} part-time positions

FEDERAL OFFICIALS

President

The president is the chief executive of the United States and the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. With the approval of the Senate, the president appoints federal judges, cabinet members, and other public officials, except as otherwise provided by law. The president is elected every four years, and may serve no more than two terms. *Salary: \$400,000*.

Vice President

The vice president is elected together with the president. The vice president is first in line of succession to the president. The vice president is also the president of the Senate, but may only cast a vote to break a tie. *Salary: \$230,700.*

U.S. Representative

The House of Representatives is one of the two houses that compose the U.S. Congress, with the power to enact laws, impeach officials, and determine budget priorities. The number of representatives for each state is apportioned according to the population of that state, based on the census, which is taken every ten years (the next census is 2017). Representatives must be an inhabitant of the state from which they are elected at the time of election, and are elected every two years. *Salary:* \$174,000.

U.S. Senator

The U.S. Senate is one of the two houses that comprise the U.S. Congress. The Senate enacts laws, approves presidential appointments, and also has the sole authority to try all impeachments. The Senate is composed of two senators from each state, each of whom must be an inhabitant of the state at the time of election. Senators serve for a term of six years. Terms of office for senators are staggered such that one-third of the Senate seats are up for election every two years. *Salary:* \$174,000.

WHICH ELECTED OFFICIAL DO I NEED FOR MY ISSUE?

ISSUE	ELECTED OFFICIAL
My building has had no heat or hot water for the past month.	City Council Member
My school is in danger of closing and needs funding to stay open next year!	State Senator State Assembly Member Public Advocate City Council Member
My best friend is undocumented, and needs financial aid to go to school. How can I help him?	U.S. Representative U.S. Senator
The cost of rent is too high! My family is about to lose our apartment.	Public Advocate City Council Member
I'm a college student, and I can't afford tuition, and a monthly MetroCard.	State Senator State Assembly Member
l want to see changes made to our city's gun laws.	U.S. Representative State Senator State Assembly Member Mayor City Council Member
There are not enough healthy food options in my community.	Mayor Borough President City Council Member
My community garden needs funding to continue into next year.	City Council Member
I am a youth with a criminal record, and I want to see the laws for minor convictions changed.	State Senator State Assembly Member
I want to be able to vote early and online.	Governor State Senator State Assembly Member
There's a street light on my corner that has been broken for months!	Mayor City Council Member
I am concerned about climate change and pollution in NYC.	Mayor City Council Member

HOW DO I CONTACT MY ELECTED OFFICIALS?

Step 1: Find your elected officials. There are a number of websites that make it easy for you to find your elected officials.

Here are a few:

- <u>Common Cause</u>
- League of Women Voters
- New York City Council

Step 2: Search online for the official websites for the elected officials, or use the NYC Votes website. Within the official websites, the elected officials may have their email addresses listed, as well as the street addresses for their district offices.

Step 3: Find their social media accounts. Their official websites may also list links to their social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instragram, and even LinkedIn. You can use these accounts to contact your elected officials directly, or their press managers.

VOTING RIGHTS: MAJOR DATES IN HISTORY

★ 14th Amendment, 1868

All persons born or naturalized are citizens of the United States and the state where they reside. All U.S. citizens are guaranteed equal protection under the law.

★ 15th Amendment, 1870

All men, irrespective of race, color, or previous servitude, are granted the right to vote.

★ 19th Amendment, 1920

Women are granted the right to vote.

★ 24th Amendment, 1964

Poll taxes for voters are prohibited in federal elections.

★ Voting Rights Act

Voting Rights Act, 1965: Act that aimed to overcome legal barriers at the state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote under the 15th Amendment.

★ 26th Amendment, 1976

18-year-olds are granted the right to vote.

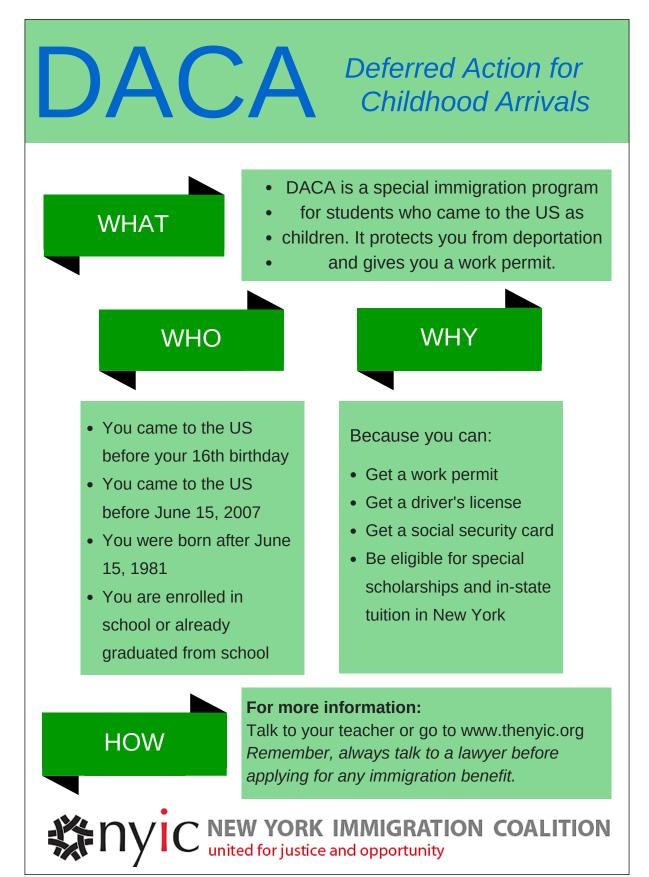
ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION

New York State Absentee Ballot Application	BOARD USE ONLY:		
lease print clearly. See detailed instructions.	Town/City/Ward/Dist:		
his application must either be personally delivered to your county board of elections not ster than the day before the election, or postmarked by a governmental postal service of later than 7th day before election day. The ballot itself must either be personally elivered to the board of elections no later than the close of polls on election day, or ostmarked by a governmental postal service not later than the day before the election and eceived no later than the 7th day after the election.	 Registration No: Party: □ voted in office		
 temporary illness or physical disability permanent illness or physical disability duties related to primary care of one or more Hospital Hospital detention in jail/ action by a grand 	in a Veterans' Administration prison, awaiting trial, awaiting jury, or in prison for a conviction nse which was not a felony		
2. absentee ballot(s) requested for the following election(s) : □ Primary Election only □ Any election held between these dates: absence begins: ///////	Special Election only absence ends://		
Bast name or surname first name	middle initial suffix		
4. date of birth county where you live	phone number (optional)		
address where you live (residence) street apt city	state zip code		
	NY		
Delivery of Primary Election Ballot (check one) Deliver to me in person			
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POLL WORKER APPLICATION

	Initials		Initials
VSN #:		NYCAPS EMPLOYEE ID	
PARTY/STATUS: NOT REGISTERED		POLL WORKER#:	
MISSING INFORMATION - SPECIFY	. —	Source:	
	•		
Borough:BOA	ARD OF ELECTIONS	N THE CITY OF NEW YORK	Date:
	POLL WORKE	R APPLICATION	
	n July 15, (current year)	. (O) B	
Are you a New York City Resident? Yes No	16 A	BOT ALL ALL	ars of age? Yes No
If No to either question, DO NOT CO	DNTINUE. Please n	ote, all incomplete applicatio	ns will be returned.
NAME	le last	suffix (Jr., Sr.)	le / / /
HOME ADDRESS	12.50		une of on m
house #	street	and the second	apt #
city	state zip	code in in	a care of /P.O. Box
PHONE NUMBER day: ()	night: (
area code	ext. area c		ea code
SOCIAL SECURITY #		IL ADDRESS	
(Fill in ONLY if you wish to have your payche below and the dates it would be in effect.) Effe		uddress than the one listed above; plea	ise provide the alternate address
	month		nonth day year
house #	street	aj	ot #
city	zip code	in care of / P	O Box
ALL POLL WORKERS ARE REQUIRE			
			YES NO
 Are you currently or have you ever been If yes, please advise for which agency 		ork City Government?	
2. *Please indicate which of the following l	anmianes you speak fi	uently: Spanich* Chinasa M	landarin*
e	0011	· — · —	landarin
Chinese Cantonese* Korean**		Hindi** 🔲 Punjabi**	
Do you hold an elected office paid for ou If Yes, state the office in which emplo			
	,		
4. Are you a candidate, or the spouse, parent,	or child of such a candida	ate, for any public office or party p	osition
 Are you a candidate, or the spouse, parent, to be contested at an upcoming election 			
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INTRODUCTION TO DACA



WHY DACA?







PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

REAL MONEY • REAL PROJECTS • REAL POWER

Participatory Budgeting is a democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of the public budget. Community members discuss local needs and develop proposals to meet these needs. Through a public vote, residents then decide which proposals to fund.

This year in New York City, 27 Council Members across the city are asking residents to decide how to spend at least **\$27 million** in capital funding. Community members can propose and vote on projects like improvements to schools, parks, libraries, public housing, and other public or community spaces.

PARTICIPATING COUNCIL MEMBERS

MANHATTAN:

Corey Johnson (District 3) Ben Kallos (District 5) Mark Levine (District 7) Melissa Mark-Viverito (District 8) Ydanis Rodriguez (District 10) Helen Rosenthal (District 6) David Greenfield (District 44) Brad Lander (District 39) Stephen Levin (District 33) Carlos Menchaca (District 38) Antonio Reynoso (District 34) Mark Treyger (District 47) Jumaane D. Williams (District 45)

BROOKLYN:

Robert Cornegy (District 36) Laurie Cumbo (District 35) Mathieu Eugene (District 40)

OUEENS:

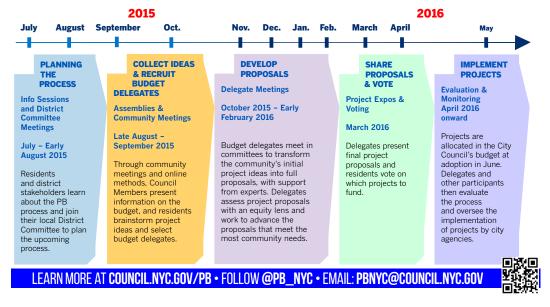
Costa Constantinides (District 22) Elizabeth Crowley (District 30) Julissa Ferreras-Copeland (District 21) Karen Koslowitz (District 29) I. Daneek Miller (District 27) Donovan Richards (District 31) Eric Ulrich (District 32) Paul Vallone (District 19) Jimmy Van Bramer (District 26)

BRONX:

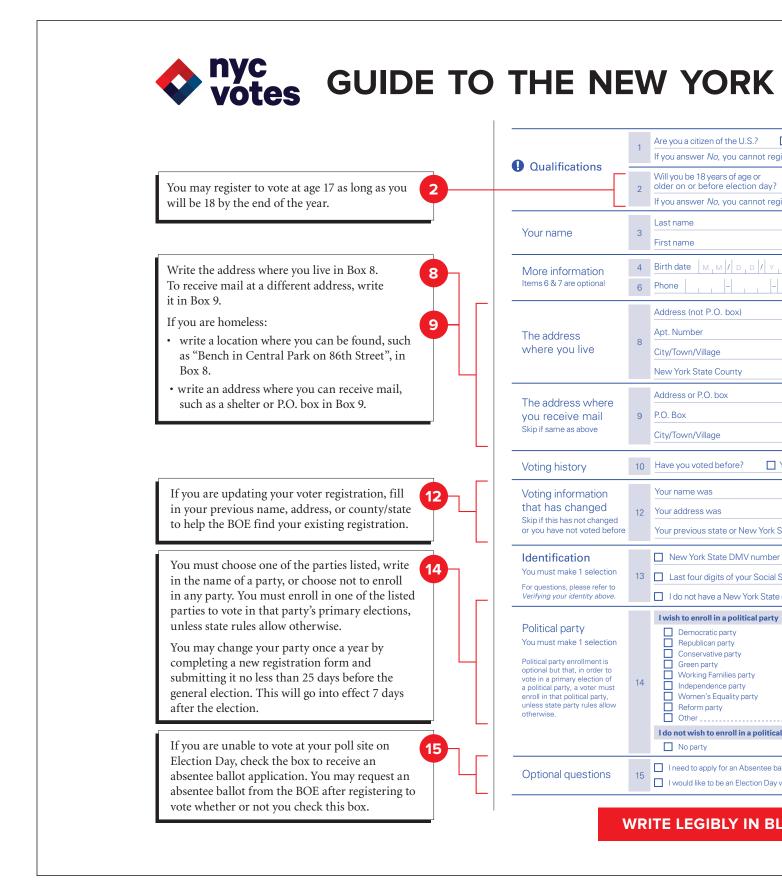
Andrew Cohen (District 11) Melissa Mark-Viverito (District 8) Ritchie Torres (District 15)

TIMELINE: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN?

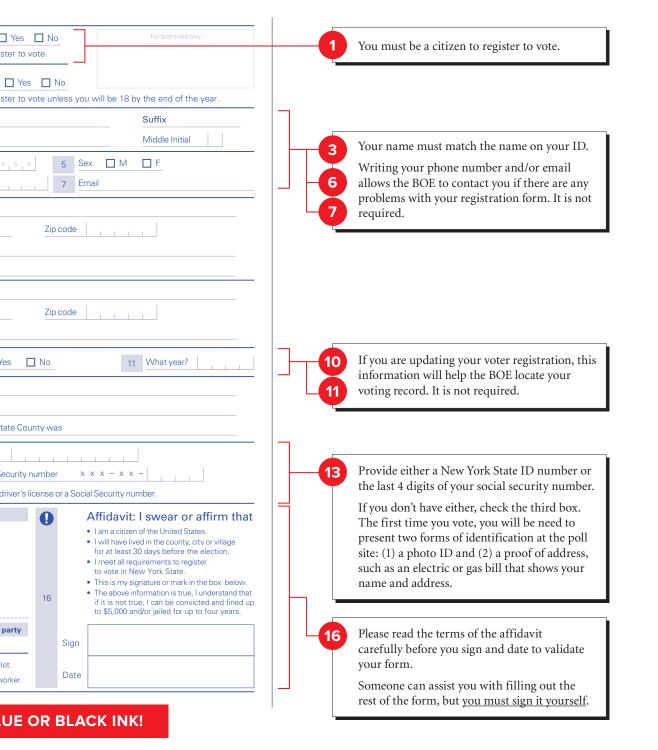
The PB process involves a series of meetings that feed into the city's annual budget cycle. The 2015-2016 cycle has five main phases, starting in July 2015 and continuing into 2016.



GUIDE TO THE NEW YORK STATE REGISTRATION FORM



STATE VOTER REGISTRATION FORM



PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING REGISTRATION FORMS

Thank you for participating in the first annual Student Voter Registration Day! The workshop facilitator will collect the voter registration forms and submit to NYC Votes for processing.

If there are students who wish to submit their poll worker or absentee ballot applications after the workshop, the forms can be mailed in directly to the Board of Elections. See below the list of NYC Board of Elections offices.

Bronx

1780 Grand Concourse, 5th Floor Bronx, NY 10457 Tel: 1.718.299.9017 Fax: 1.718.299.2140 Hours of Operation: 9am – 5pm

Brooklyn

345 Adams Street, 4th Floor Brooklyn, NY 11201 Tel: 1.718.797.8800 Fax: 1.718.246.5958 Hours of Operation: 9am – 5pm

Queens

126-06 Queens Boulevard Kew Gardens, NY 11415 Tel: 1.718.730.6730 Fax: 1.718.459.3384 Hours of Operation: 9am – 5pm

Manhattan

200 Varick Street, 10th Floor New York, NY 10014 Tel: 1.212.886.2100 Fax: 1.646.638.2047 Hours of Operation: 9am – 5pm

Staten Island

1 Edgewater Plaza, 4th Floor Staten Island, NY 10305 Tel: 1.718.876.0079 Fax: 1.718.876.0912 Hours of Operation: 9am – 5pm

Helpful Links

http://www.nyccfb.info/PDF/issue_reports/WhoVotes.pdf http://www.sos.wv.gov/elections/civics/Documents/Why%20is%20Voting%20important.pdf http://www.rockthevote.com/get-informed/elections/frequently-asked-questions/ https://votesmart.org/education/vocabulary#.VLghvyvF9ql http://gothamist.com/2014/04/23/make_under_40k_good_luck_renting_an.php http://blogs.wsj.com/numbers/congatulations-to-class-of-2014-the-most-indebted-ever-1368/ https://www.aclu.org/files/VRATimeline.html?redirect=timeline-history-voting-rights-act http://www1.cuny.edu/portal_ur/content/voting_cal/milestones.html https://theautry.org/explore/exhibits/suffrage/suff_time.html http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/voting-rights-act http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/29/magazine/voting-rights-act-dream-undone.html

Stay Connected

For more information on voting and elections in NYC, find us on Facebook and Twitter @NYCVOTES! To contact NYC Votes, email us at nycvotes@nyccfb.info.

Special thanks to the following participating schools:

Academy of Hospitality and Tourism August Martin High School Benjamin N. Cardozo High School Boys and Girls High School Bronx High School of Science Brooklyn Technical High School College of Staten Island School for International Studies Cypress Hills Collegiate Preparatory School East Side Community High School Edward A. Reynolds West Side High School Eleanor Roosevelt High School Franklin Delano Roosevelt High School Forest Hills High School Fort Hamilton High School Francis Lewis High School George Washington Carver High School for the Sciences George Westinghouse Career and Technical Education High School **Global Learning Collaborative** George Washington Educational Campus Harlem Renaissance High School Hillcrest High School High School for Civil Rights High School for Medical Professions High School of Art and Design High School of Enterprise, Business, & Technology High School of Fashion Industries Humanities & Arts Magnet High School James Madison High School John Dewey High School KAPPA International High School Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts

Herbert H. Lehman High School Long Island City High School Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics Marie Curie School for Medicine, Nursing, and **Health Professions** Maspeth High School Midwood High School Millennium Brooklyn High School Morris Academy of Collaborative Studies Mott Hall V New Utrecht High School Newtown High School Pace High School Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) Port Richmond High School **PROGRESS High School for Professional Careers** Queens Collegiate Robert F. Kennedy Community High School Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy Rockaway Park High School for **Environmental Sustainability** Secondary School for Journalism Science, Technology And Research Early College High School At Erasmus (STAR) Sunset Park High School Susan E. Wagner High School **Teacher's Preparatory School** Tottenville High School Transit Tech Career and Technical **Education High School** Harry S. Truman High School Urban Assembly School for Careers in Sports William Cullen Bryant High School World Journalism Preparatory School