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ABSTRACT

Recommended procedures and essential facts for a planned student registration campaign in New York City Schools, as well as suggested teaching strategies and instructional aids supporting a broad-based senior year preparation for the 18-year-old franchise comprise this document. The suggested teaching strategies involve large and small group activities, independent study, and use of varied media. Questions for discussion and study include, among others: 1) How much difference will voting by 18-year-olds make? What changes will they want in government; 2) What does a vote mean in our elective process; and, 3) When the Supreme Court ruled on the right of 18-year-olds to vote, they also ruled that persons who did not know how to read and write could vote -- if any, what limits should be set for the right to vote? Also outlined are key concepts and terms, major understandings, and further questions for inquiry and discovery. Reading selections on the subject of political parties, and copies of recent newspaper articles concerning the 18-year-old vote are included for discussion. The list of suggested references consists of books, articles, films, filmstrips, and tapes. A list of local institutional sources of information and their addresses concludes the document. (JIB)

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BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES  
110 LIVINGSTON STREET, BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11201

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April 2, 1971

To: Assistant Superintendents - Office of High Schools  
High School Principals  
Assistant Principals - Supervision Social Studies High Schools

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Re: Citizenship Education and Registration of Eligible Voters in  
High School.

In a letter from this office dated January 28, 1971, I requested that  
plans be made during Spring 1971 for:

- An instructional program in the Senior Year which will stress  
the importance of student registration, voting and active  
participation in election procedures.
- Procedures for voter registration of 18 year-olds.

Enclosed herewith are recommended procedures for voter registration  
and suggested teaching strategies. The Board of Elections will be a  
cooperating partner in this program. Representatives from the  
professional staff, League of Woman Voters and Board of Elections  
assisted the Bureau of Social Studies in this citizenship education  
program.

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Enclosed herewith are recommended procedures for voter registration and suggested teaching strategies. The Board of Elections will be a cooperating partner in this program. Representatives from the professional staff, League of Woman Voters and Board of Elections assisted the Bureau of Social Studies in this citizenship education program.

I trust it will prove of value to you.

Sincerely yours,

SEELIG LESTER  
Deputy Superintendent

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BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
BUREAU OF SOCIAL STUDIES  
131 Livingston Street  
Brooklyn, New York 11201

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM FOR STUDENT REGISTRATION,  
VOTING AND PARTICIPATION IN ELECTION ACTIVITIES

Recommended Procedures For Registration Campaign

- Each school should formulate its own plans, within the guidelines below, based on local conditions.
- The Principal should designate a staff member as voter-registration coordinator - preferably the Assistant Principal-Supervision of Social Studies.
- The Board of Elections will contact each school within the next few weeks to arrange for a definite schedule when registration will take place at a mutually convenient date.
- Designated representatives of The Board of Elections will meet with school officials, student leaders and teachers at each school, to train them in registration procedures and to deputize them as registrars.
- At the scheduled dates for registration the Board of Elections will provide one or more Co-ordinators to over-see the actual registration process, as well as all the required materials and supplies for registration.
- An intensive program in citizenship education involving social studies, language arts, student leadership and government, using materials in this circular should precede actual registration in school.

### Suggested Plan For Voter Registration Campaign

- Establish steering committee of students, Coordinator Student Affairs, Advisor of Student Government, teachers and administrators, under the direction of the Assistant Principal-Supervision of Social Studies.
- Train student-discussion teams on political power of youth, party structure and politics, registration and voting. Members of Leadership Class may be utilized.
- Schedule student teams to visit senior social studies and/or English classes. Also junior year classes should be included with students who will be 18 years old on, or before, November 3, 1971.
- Set aside 3-5 days of instruction in junior and senior Social Studies classes for review and reenforcement of citizenship education relating to political process, parties and individual rights and responsibilities.  
SEE ATTACH SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES.
- Arrange for registration procedures with representative of Board of Elections: Mr. Ludwig Gelobter, Special Coordinator  
Board of Elections  
80 Varick Street  
New York, N.Y. 10013  
Tel. 226-2600

e.g. Registration in subject classes (preferred procedure)  
Registration tables in Lobby  
Registration and Voting Laboratory-Room  
decorated and equipped to stimulate interest  
in political affairs.

A Checklist

Select a specific day or days for student registration. Publicize. Use all media.

Coordinate activities with Board of Election representatives.

Have all necessary voter registration materials available including worksheets. These will be provided by the Board of Elections.

Arrange for schedule of student registration. Be sure classes and students know when registration will occur. Provide for absentees.

Distribute registration worksheets a day before actual registration to students born on or before November 3, 1953.

Have students PRINT information - Do not use shaded portion of worksheet.

Worksheet Guidance

Give the information asked for in the areas marked by the following numbers:

- 1.
- 2.
- 5.
6. November 3, 1971 is the time of the next election
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
19. If you do not know the street address where you were born, it is not important
20. This portion is only to be completed by those people who were not born within the continental boundaries of the United States or in Puerto Rico or in the Canal Zone. If you were not born in the United States and your parents were not citizens at the time of your birth, you will need to bring your mother's, father's or your own citizenship papers and complete #20.

STUDENTS ARE TO BRING COMPLETED WORKSHEETS ON DAY OF REGISTRATION IN ORDER TO COMPLETE OTHER FORMS

There are no literacy requirements.

Citizenship All persons born within the continental boundaries of the United States, in Puerto Rico or the Canal Zone are citizens. Proof of citizenship must be presented for students whose parents were not citizens of the United States at the time of their birth.

Some Suggested Teaching Strategies

Large Group, Class and Small Group Activities

- Prepare sample lesson plans around such topics as: The importance of voting in a democracy, how election machinery works, role of third parties, propaganda analysis.
- Prepare a bulletin board of background information on the election process.
- Construct a chart announcing the increasing number of registered student voters
- Prepare a chart-check list of the steps in active political participation—Canvassing, Petitioning, poll-watching, "ringing door-bells" and telephoning surveys, reminders and information to voters, attending meetings and rallies, etc.
- Debate or Panel Discussions: The States should ratify the 26th Amendment.  
 Presidential Nominees Should Be Selected By National Primaries.  
 The Electoral College Should Be Abolished. Dissident Factions in The Republican and Democratic Parties Should Form a Third Party.  
 New York State Voters Should Approve the Amendment to State Constitution lowering the Voting age to 18.  
 Party Registration is Necessary.

- Independent Study - Reports on topics such as biographies of the political candidates, reasons for voter apathy, proposals for reforming the Electoral College, the influence of third parties on American politics. Book reports (e.g., "The Last Hurrah").
- Show filmstrips and films on political parties, election of the President, Congress.
- Involve Students in the State Constitution Amendment referendum granting 18 years olds the right to vote in state and local elections and for U.S. Constitution Amendment passed by The Congress.
- Organize Student Voter Registration Drive (see guidelines above)
- Set up a special election room or "voting laboratory." Simulate real voting process and techniques with real voting machines and booths. Stock with appropriate literature. Staff with representatives of local political clubs to hold demonstrations and answer questions.
- Hold assembly program, forums, and Town Meetings, inviting representatives of the major political parties as speakers and participants.
- Disseminate and distribute registration literature and facts (e.g. League of Women Voters pamphlets).
- Publish in the school newspaper - a page or section on "Registration News".
- Display campaign posters throughout the school building - not only candidates' pictures, slogans, etc., but also charts and graphs illustrating close pluralities in previous Federal election, (e.g., 1960, 1968).



SUGGESTED TEACHING MATERIALS

## Motivational and Discussion Materials

New York Times  
March 24, 1971

## Plan for Full Voting at 18 Sent to States by House

**18-to-19 Vote Finishes Amendment Is Expected  
Action in Congress on Lowering of Age  
to Clear Legislatures  
Before '72 Election**

By MARJORIE RUNTER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 23--A proposed constitutional amendment to lower the voting age to 18 in all elections indicated Congress today after little more than token opposition.

If ratified by at least 38 of the 50 state legislatures, it would become the 26th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Final approval came today in the House on a vote of 400 to 10. The Senate approved the proposal, 94 to 8, on March 10.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 23--The constitutional amendment to give 18-year-olds the right to vote in all elections appears likely to win approval in enough state legislatures to take effect by the 1972 elections.

A survey of the outlook for the proposed 26th Amendment, conducted over the last few days by The New York Times, indicates that at least 38 states will approve it within a short period. Once 38 legislatures approve the proposal, it automatically takes effect.

Many of the state legislatures

New York Times  
March 24, 1971

### Text of the Proposal For 18-Year-Old Vote

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 23--Following is the text of the proposed 26th constitutional amendment, sent by Congress to the state legislatures today, that would permit 18-year-olds to vote in all elections:

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of age.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Negro History  
Bulletin  
January, 1971

Finally, with a new together and with a new breed of blacks who will include in their history a well-mastered discipline the nation will need, let us develop an unprecedented interest in political machinery of the country that will make effective use of new strength in the cities.

No one knows what direction change will take. There is wisdom in the notion that from the top of mountains there is a peripheral view that one cannot have looking from half-way up one side. We cannot dictate the terms of power redistribution until that power is real and in our hands. Today, the masses in the cities constitute a field for sociology dissertations, educational experiments and economic dilettantism. I am crushed by equating of the black masses with urban blight. Let the black masses be equated with black political strength. This is happening in Newark, in Atlanta, in Norfolk, in

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 22 —A proposed constitutional amendment to lower the voting age to 18 in all elections passed Congress today after little more than token opposition.

If ratified by at least 38 of the 50 state legislatures, it would become the 26th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Final approval came today in the House on a vote of 400 to 19. The Senate approved the proposal, 94 to 9, on March 10. Unlike most legislation, it does not require the President's signature.

Many of the state legislatures were prepared to act without even waiting for formal copies of the proposed amendment. The Minnesota Legislature, for example, ratified the amendment within minutes after the House voted its approval. Connecticut, Delaware, Tennessee and Washington also ratified.

WASHINGTON, March 22 —The constitutional amendment to give 18-year-olds the right to vote in all elections appears likely to win approval in enough state legislatures to take effect by the 1972 elections.

A survey of the outlook for the proposed 26th Amendment, conducted over the last few days by The New York Times, indicates that at least 28 states will approve it within a short period. Once 38 legislatures approve the proposal, it automatically takes effect.

Many of the state legislatures are prepared to act without even waiting for formal copies of the proposed amendment that cleared Congress today.

While some state legislatures seem genuinely eager to broaden the electorate to include the 18-year-olds, others appear prompted more by the desire to avoid dual registration and voting procedures, estimated to cost up to \$20-million nationwide.

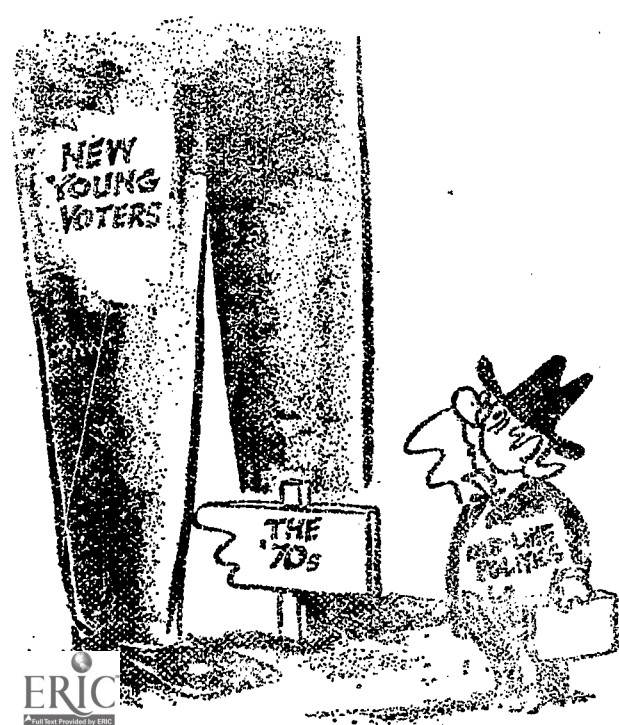
older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of age.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

mountains there is a perpetual that one cannot have looking from half-way up one side. We dictate the terms of power redistribution until that power is real in our hands. Today, the masses in the cities constitute a for sociology dissertations, educational experiments and economic elitism. I am crushed by equating of the black masses urban blight. Let the black masses be equated with black political strength. This is happening in Newark in Atlanta, in Norfolk, in Falmouth and in Washington. Only 10% of the eligible voters went to polls in 1968. For every one who voted, two were asleep, standing a corner, leaning on a bar, or pacing up and down. Whenever reference is made to anything urban is a reference to black pathology.

All of this must change. Because we got caught up in the rhetoric of revolution let us comprehend reality of politics. The prelude to revolution is the kind of revolution redeems rather than destroys, results in black power rather than black incarceration—let us transfer the black urban masses to black political articulation.

The heavens are not going to divide and lower a new Jerusalem in our midst. But if we get together, acquire some critical skills and make our presence felt, the waters will part. We'll march across them to dry land, scale high mountains and make the desert blossom like a rose.



Samuel D. Proctor, "Revolution In A Technological Society" Negro History Bulletin, Vol. 34, No. 1 January 1971, p. 9

# The Coming Political Struggle

New York Times  
February 17, 1971

By JAMES HESTON

Keeping up with the political moods and fads of the United States these days is a puzzling business. They go up and down like women's skirts. Less than a year ago the university community and the black community were in a rebellious mood, and now, they are told, they are leaderless, divided and apathetic.

Well, maybe so, but nothing in this country is ever quite as definite, as good or as bad as the trend-seekers and headline-writers make out. The atmosphere has changed, but nothing fundamental in world or national politics has really been transformed. The war goes on, with the same strategy on both sides, but with different tactics. Washington, Moscow and Peking have modified their propaganda but not their objectives.

It is the same in world economics. Moscow promises more consumer goods in its next five-year plan. The Nixon Administration promises more jobs and less inflation. The rich nations and the poor nations of the world, and the rich and poor people at home, are roughly where they were a year ago, and unless there is some vastly thunderclap in the news, the chances are that present war and economic policies will have to work themselves out on the battlefield and in the market place.

In short, there is not likely to be any basic difference in the policies of Washington, Moscow, Peking, Saigon until there is a change of government in these capitals, and

## NEW YORK

maybe not even then. The Democrats, meeting in Washington this week, have an agreement not to attack one another, but they have no foreign or domestic policy for the war or the economy, and could not define one without attacking each other. So everybody is playing the old political game, organizing arguments and staffs, and waiting to see what happens on the battlefields of Indochina, Wall Street, industry and the welfare rolls, nobody quite knowing what is going to happen.

In this situation, it is easy to understand the apathy of the people who feel frustrated and even defeated by the struggle of the last few years, and are now loitering down into silence and despair. There is even a kind of wisdom in their melancholy intolerance, for the President's war policy and economic policy are set, and no new confrontations, or demonstrations, or challenges in the Senate over Laos or unemployment are likely to change them in the next few months.

Still, if the people of all ages who are unhappy with the old politics really want to do something about it, now is the time. If they want to influence present policies, or future Presidential candidates in both parties, it is not too early to begin.

The Supreme Court has given the vote in the next Presidential election to 11.5 million Americans between the ages of 18 and 21. This could easily be decisive in the Presidential election of 1972. Mr. Nixon lost the 1960 elec-

tion to John Kennedy by 113,000 votes, and Mr. Nixon, in a spectacular comeback, won the election of 1968, but with only 43 per cent of the vote.

What is happening now is that the two major political parties are beginning to organize in their usual ways, arguing with one another about who is responsible for the killing in Vietnam and the unemployment and inflation at home, but the new black voters and the new 18-21-year-old voters probably hold the decisive margin.

The interesting thing about all this is that the young people who have been challenging both parties and old establishment values may very well have won, but don't know it. Because they didn't win everything in their first challenge, they are now full of self-pity and despair.

This is very odd in a generation that regards itself as superior, wiser and more compassionate than the old liberal gatekeepers of the past, but the fact is that they now have the votes in their own age group, between 18 and 30, to influence policy and even to determine the outcome of the Presidential election of 1972.

They do, however, have to come alive and organize. They cannot merely complain or demonstrate or use violence to impose their will on the rest, but if they register the 18-21-year-olds, and ally themselves with the other voters who are disillusioned by both parties, they might very well influence war policy and economic policy between now and 1972. And they could be decisive in the next Presidential election.

In the 1948 presidential election the candidates were Harry S. Truman and Thomas E. Dewey. In Ohio, Truman defeated Dewey by 7,107 votes and received the 25 electoral votes for the state. There were 9,247 precincts in Ohio. If there had been one more vote per precinct for Dewey, Dewey could have won the Ohio electoral votes.

In that same year a history-making election took place in Texas. Lyndon B. Johnson defeated Governor Stevenson for senator. The margin of victory was 87 votes of 988,295 cast.

In California, in 1916, Woodrow Wilson defeated Charles Evans Hughes for President by 3,806 votes. If Hughes had received one more vote in each California precinct, he would have won in California. With 13 electoral votes, Hughes would have been elected President

by three electoral votes.

In 1954 one more vote in each precinct for the losing candidate would have elected a different senator in Ohio and a different senator in New Jersey. That same year the mayor of Newark, Ohio, was elected by one vote after a recount of the votes.

In 1962 the Republican candidate for governor of Minnesota was reported to be elected by a difference of 14 votes. After two recounts, taking five months, a special three-judge state court ruled that the Democratic candidate the real winner by a 91-vote margin. The final vote was 619,842 to 619,751.

F. Dimond and F. Pfleiger, Civics For Citizens,  
P. Lippincott Co. 1970 p. 293

#### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How much difference will voting by 18 year-olds make? What changes will they want in government?
2. What does a vote mean in our elective process?
3. When the Supreme Court ruled on the right of 18 year-olds to vote, they also ruled that persons who did not know how to read and write could vote. If any, what limits should be set for the right to vote?
4. Now that 18 year-olds have the right to vote in national elections, they must shoulder a greater responsibility for what happens in our social and political system. They can no longer blame "others" for mistakes made. How can the new teen-age voters act responsibly in their new role?

5. How can we make sure that the new voters are not misled by propaganda and that they don't make any mistakes.

## Political Parties: How Do Americans Organize To Control Their Governments

Key Concepts and Terms

politics	primaries; party and public
political party	offices
two-party system	convention
minority political parties	caucus
major party goals and organization	majority
independent voting	plurality
liberal and conservative wings of major parties	registered voter

Understandings

- Opposing political parties are necessary in a representative democracy.
- Our two-party system was developed over a long period of time.
- Our two major parties share certain characteristics.
- Minor parties differ in important respects from major parties.
- A number of factors may account for voters' party preference.
- Young voters constitute a potential political influence in public policy-making.

Reading Selections For Discussion

## Political Parties

Political parties are organizations of citizens who hold similar ideas on public questions. Should the farmer receive more for his crops? Should labor unions be permitted to keep nonunion members from working in a factory? Are businesses charging too much for certain products? Should the federal government provide more money for schools?

People do not think alike on these matters. Some favor helping the farmer to increase his income; others think prices on food products are too high. Some are strongly in favor of labor unions and would help them in any way possible; others are not strong for labor unions and want their powers decreased. There are many differences over business matters: in prices, working conditions, ownership, quality of products. There are similar differences over who should pay the cost of your education in school.

Political parties exist because people differ in their ideas. Those who think somewhat alike on many issues join one party. Those who think differently join another party. The political party helps people who think alike to control government.

Stanley E. Dimond and Elmer  
F. Pfeiffer, Civics For Citizens,  
Philadelphia, J.P. Lippincott  
Company 1970. p. 292.

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### PARTIES AND POLITICS

The primary function of a political party in a democracy such as ours is to control and direct the struggle of power. From this function all other derive naturally. . . .

It is one of the aspirations of democracy to bring this struggle as much as possible into the open. It is the great purpose of political parties, the handmaidens of democracy, to bring the struggle under control; to institutionalize it with organization, to channel it through nominations and elections, to publicize it by means of platforms and appeals, above all to stabilize it in the form of that traditional quadrille in which the Ins and the Outs change places from time to time on a signal from the voters. The parties did not create the struggle for power; it would go on merrily without them. It would go on, however, much less purposefully and openly, and we might well be more grateful to our own parties for their modest efforts to bring under benevolent control the eternal conflict of interests described by Madison in The Federalist, No. 10. . . .

(Political parties) set up and operate the machinery that places men and women in public office, and they do it at four key points: nominations, for they are organized to do the preliminary sifting of aspirants to elective office or, if necessary, to go out and recruit them actively; campaigns, for they make known to the voting public the credentials and promises of the narrowed list of candidates; elections, for they can provide (in bulk and at small cost) the swarm of citizens needed to man the polls and count the votes; and appointments, for they are no less eager to assist in the selective process than they are in the elective process.

Clinton Rossiter. Parties and Politics in America. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1960. pp.39-40.

and Politics in America.

Ithaca, New York: Cornell  
University Press, 1960. pp.39-40.

Questions For Inquiry and Discovery

1. "The primary function of a political party in a democracy such as ours is to control and direct the struggle for power." "The parties did not create the struggle for power. It would go on merrily without them." Explain and illustrate what is meant by "the struggle for power". Be specific.
2. Using a local, state or national election as a case study, explain and illustrate four key functions of a political party:
  - nominations
  - campaigns
  - elections
  - appointments
3. How would you begin to involve yourself with a political party in your community?
4. Why are political parties organized?
5. How can individuals with common interests go about organizing a political party?
6. Assume you and friends want to organize a political party, describe what you consider to be basic elements you must put together.
7. In an interview marking his 70th Birthday, Leonard Hall, former Chairman of the Republican National Committee is quoted as asking, "What are all those young kids complaining about? All they have to do is take over enough election districts and they can take over an organization". Explain this statement.

Suggested References

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- Libarale, Marc and Seligson, Tom, The High School Revolutionaries (Random House)
- \* Mackum, Patricia - Politics (Franklin Watts)



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\* Leinwand, Gerald, The Draft (Washington Square Press)

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\* Mackum, Patricia - Politics (Franklin Watts)

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Scholastic Magazines - Editors - What You Should Know About Democracy (Scholastic)

\* Young, Bob and Young, Jan., One Small Voice (Messner)

Youth In Turmoil (Time-Life Books)

\* Recommended for pupils achieving below grade level.

Board of Education - Grade 11 - American History (American Studies) Course of Study and Related Learning Activities. pp. 1-5; 20-196.



Source of Information-Organizations:

Board of Elections - BOROUGH OFFICES

New York: 80 Varick Street  
New York, N.Y. 10013  
Tel. 226-2600

Bronx: 1780 Grand Concourse  
Bronx, N.Y. 10457  
Tel. 299-9017

Brooklyn: 345 Adams Street  
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201  
Tel. 522-2441

Queens: 77-40 Vleigh Place  
Flushing, N.Y. 11367  
Tel. 526-2600

Richmond: 30 Bay Street  
St. George, S.I. 10301  
Tel. 727-4300

The League of Women Voters of City of New York  
131 East 23rd Street  
New York, N.Y. 10010  
Tel. OR-7-5050

Citizens Voter Education Campaign of New York State  
342 Madison Avenue  
Room 814  
New York, N.Y. 10017  
Tel. 682-4720

United States Immigration and Naturalization Service  
20 West Broadway  
New York, N.Y.  
Tel. 264-1880  
(questions pertaining to validation of citizenship)

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Acknowledgments

Materials Prepared by:

Committee on Citizenship and Registration of Eligible Voters in  
High School.

Dr. Seelig Lester, Deputy Superintendent - Chairman  
Dr. Leonard W. Ingraham, Director Bureau of Social Studies - Secretary  
Mr. Albert Post, Assistant Director Bureau of Social Studies  
Office of High Schools - Carl Berlin, Executive Assistant  
George Castka, Assistant Administrative Director

Standing Committee for Social Studies - Irving Sanders, Assistant  
Principal - Social Studies  
John Adams High School  
Eli Axelbank, Teacher Social  
Studies - James Monroe High  
School  
Richard Kobliner, Teacher Social  
Studies - De Witt Clinton  
High School - Currently assigned  
Bureau Curriculum Development

League of Women Voters - Mrs. Robert Emanuel, Director of Voters Service

Board of Elections - Maurice J. O'Rourke, President  
Ludwig Gelobter, Coordinator Special Registration  
Steven S. Rothenberg, Co-Coordinator Special  
Registration  
Daniel Stewart, Co-Coordinator Special Registration