



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: Temperance and Good Citizenship Day—Voter Registration

2025

Authorizing Legislation: [RCW 28A.230.150](#)

Rebecca Wallace

**Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education
and Pathway Preparation**

Prepared by:

- **Katie Taylor**, Director—Secondary Education Content
katie.taylor@k21.wa.us | 360-706-3763
- **Andrew Miller**, Associate Director— Content, Social Studies
andrew.miller@k12.wa.us | 360-870-0066

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every year on January 16, Washington public schools participate in Temperance and Good Citizenship Day (TAGCD) in accordance with Revised Code of Washington (RCW) [28A.230.150](#). On this day, Washington social studies teachers must provide instructional time for high school seniors to register to vote. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in consultation with the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS), prepares and publishes materials for teachers to support the teaching of elections and voting in Washington.

The Legislature established an annual goal of 50,000 new voter registrations of 17 and 18-year-olds. Between March 1, 2024, and February 28, 2025, 57,153 young adults were registered in total.

OSPI makes the following recommendations to continue increasing youth voter registration:

1. Continue to increase resources to support professional development for educators and ensure that TAGCD is recognized and implemented in districts across Washington state.
2. Continue to identify and create engaging materials to support teaching about elections and voting in K–12.
3. Work with OSOS, the Civic Learning Council, and other civic partners to identify and address existing opportunity gaps that hinder access to civic learning opportunities for students from historically marginalized communities.
4. Build upon communication channels and networks to ensure maximum participation, including earlier notification and resource sharing.
5. Consider shifting Future Voter program events to occur near to the November elections in alignment with classroom activities between September and November.

BACKGROUND

Young people continue to vote in numbers far lower than their older counterparts. Among Washington registered voters, significantly fewer 17- to 24-year-olds are registered to vote compared to any other age group (Table 1). This means that young voters are significantly underrepresented as a voting bloc. Many of the world’s pressing issues, including those that are environmental or economic, disproportionately affect young people.

Numerous studies indicate that young people are less likely to vote, belong to civic organizations, or engage in political discussions and public issues than young people in the past, or than their older counterparts (Center for Information and Research for Civic Learning and Engagement, 2003). Voting acts as a “civic barometer” and illustrates the work that needs to be completed to prepare the next generation to “become informed, engaged citizens” (Herczog, 2016).

Young people need access to knowledge and resources in order for them to be civically engaged in elections. Recent studies have shown that allowing young people to pre-register at the age of 16 or 17, making them automatically registered on their 18th birthday, increases youth voter turnout significantly (Fowler, 2017 & Tufts University, 2019). In addition, teaching about elections through experiential means, which focuses on application to relevant contexts, has a positive impact on students’ ability to cast an informed vote, to communicate with others about politics, and to feel that their vote and civic contributions matter (Syvertsen et al. 2009). Finally, it is important that young voters learn that they have a place in civic life and a key role to play in democracy as they bring a diverse perspective and experiences to school and life (CIRCLE, 2021).

Providing materials and resources for educators to engage students in opportunities to practice civic participation, understanding the importance of elections, and registering to vote, promises to increase youth voter participation.

Table 1: Registered Voters by Age Group, as of March 3, 2025

Gender	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+	Total
Female	224,894	400,615	432,044	374,544	388,750	685,370	2,506,217
Male	227,511	397,510	423,520	364,352	370,512	588,479	2,371,884
Unknown	24,704	34,661	26,396	16,580	16,301	20,666	139,308
Total	477,109	832,786	881,960	755,476	775,563	1,294,515	5,017,409

Source: Office of Secretary of State, March 3, 2025.

House Bill 1513

To address low youth voter turnout, the 2018 Legislature passed House Bill 1513 ([HB 1513](#)) that aims to increase youth voter participation. HB 1513 established the opportunity for students to register to vote when they obtain their driver's license from the Department of Licensing (DOL). In addition, it established the Future Voter Program, to be administered by OSOS. The Future Voter program allows 16- and 17-year-olds to pre-register to vote through the OSOS' online portal or by paper ballot. On their 18th birthday, young people who pre-registered are then automatically registered to vote in the state of Washington. In addition, recent legislation (effective January 1, 2022), provides 17-year-olds who will be 18 by the November General Election the opportunity to vote in the August Primary.

HB 1513 also requires public schools to provide instructional time to teach about elections and give students an opportunity to register to vote. Most 11th and 12th graders in Washington are enrolled in U.S. History, Government, Civics, and Contemporary World Problems courses, their instructors are in a unique position to provide guidance directly to students as they participate in civic life through voter registration and other opportunities. OSPI works with the OSOS to provide resources and materials to educators to assist them in this endeavor.

OSOS collects data to track how many new voters are registered through both DOL and the Future Voter, which is highlighted and supported on TAGCD.

YEARLY PROGRESS

There is sustained youth voter registration this year and year-over-year. We met the goal of 50,000 youth voter registrations, and we see an increased number of registrations this year compared with the previous year. We see a measured increase in Future Voter registrations on TAGCD as well as the days immediately preceding and following it. Please see Appendix A for data broken up by county.

As of March 3, 2025, there are 477,109 young adults registered in total. Data suggests that materials and resources shared prior to TAGCD had a positive effect on registration numbers with steady increases in Future Voter registrations (see Figure 1). Total new youth voter registrants are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: 17- and 18-year-olds pre-registered/registered to vote (3/1/24 – 2/28/25)

Early Voter Registration	17- and 18-year-olds pre-registered/registered
Department of Licensing	39,445
Future Voter Program	17,708
TOTAL	57,153

Source: Office of Secretary of State, March 2025.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

TAGCD continues to be an important day to provide educators the opportunity to discuss the importance of voting and to provide students the opportunity to register. OSOS has demonstrated their commitment to supporting this work for Youth Voter Education.

Along with the OSOS, OSPI will continue to build capacity for successful registration of students during TAGCD through the following:

- Identification, creation, and advertising of engaging materials to support teaching about elections and voting in K–12 public schools to add to current materials and resources found on OSPI’s website.
- Development of strong partnerships between educational service districts and school districts with both the OSOS and county auditors to increase involvement in schools, with a focus on rural and low socio-economic status regions.
- Continued identification of school districts and regions where early registration is high, and engagement of educators to determine best practices for increasing student engagement and registration.
- Provide feedback to the legislature for ongoing efforts to maximize Future Voter legislative initiatives.
- Work with OSOS, the Civic Learning Council, TVW, and other civic partners to identify and address existing opportunity gaps that hinder access to civic learning opportunities for students.

Recommendations

OSPI makes the following recommendations to the legislature to continue increasing youth voter registration:

1. Continue to increase resources to support professional development for educators and ensure that TAGCD is recognized and implemented in districts across Washington state.
2. Continue to identify and create engaging materials to support teaching about elections and voting in K–12.
3. Work with OSOS, the Civic Learning Council, and other civic partners to identify and address existing opportunity gaps that hinder access to civic learning opportunities for students from historically marginalized communities.
4. Build upon communication channels and networks to ensure maximum participation, including earlier notification and resource sharing.
5. Consider shifting Future Voter program events to occur near to the November elections in alignment with classroom activities between September and November.

REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Early Voter Registrations, by County

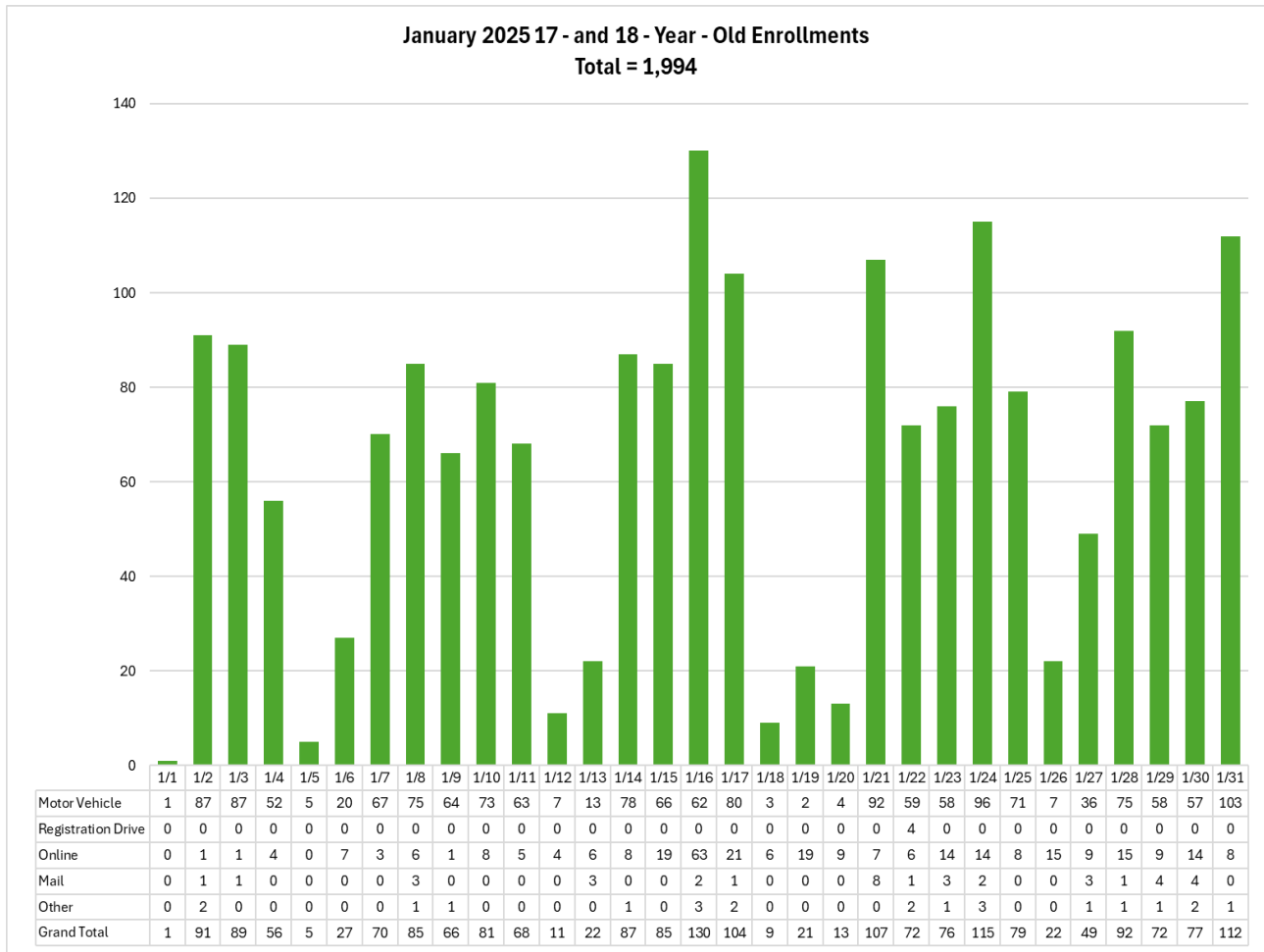
17- and 18-year-old pre-registrations/registrations by county (3/1/24 – 2/29/25)

County	DOL	Future Voter
Adams	77	68
Asotin	84	22
Benton	1,266	362
Chelan	474	106
Clallam	334	72
Clark	3,238	1,257
Columbia	17	1
Cowlitz	695	259
Douglas	288	72
Ferry	36	16
Franklin	623	155
Garfield	6	2
Grant	404	337
Grays Harbor	386	123
Island	379	168
Jefferson	155	52
King	10,379	5,315
Kitsap	1,238	802
Kittitas	161	120
Klickitat	66	83
Lewis	431	233
Lincoln	59	31
Mason	324	82
Okanogan	160	78
Pacific	96	30
Pend Oreille	66	28
Pierce	5,311	2,259
San Juan	40	47
Skagit	553	351
Skamania	29	48
Snohomish	4,184	1,759
Spokane	2,911	1,130
Stevens	270	95
Thurston	1,774	496
Wahkiakum	13	4

Walla Walla	340	95
Whatcom	1,088	524
Whitman	154	152
Yakima	1,336	874
Total	39,445	17,708

Appendix B: Future Voter Registrations

Figure 1: 17- and 18-year-old Enrollments



Source: Data provided by OSOS Voter Education & Outreach

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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Chris Reykdal | State Superintendent
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building | P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200