



## **STUDENT MOCK ELECTION**

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

### A Guide to the 2008 Pennsylvania Student Mock Election

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Governor

Prepared by the Pennsylvania  
Department of State and Department of Education

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Dear Educator:

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and State, we are proud to present to you the 2008 *Pennsylvania Student Mock Election Manual*. This publication provides resource materials on the electoral process, as well as a format for a school-wide Student Mock Election. The suggestions are meant only as a guide, and are not required for participation. This year's Student Mock Election will be held on **October 30, 2008**.

The 2006 Student Mock Election event was a resounding success in which more than 90,000 students from schools across the Commonwealth cast their votes for U.S. Senator and Governor of Pennsylvania. They also voted on six mock referendum questions.

In the coming weeks, you will receive a letter that indicates your *Ballot Integrity Code*. Procedures for using the code to report your school's vote totals will be included. This will ensure your results will be added to the statewide total. The ballots, according to grade level, will be available on the mock election website at [www.dos.state.pa.us/mockelection](http://www.dos.state.pa.us/mockelection) at the end of September.

If you have questions regarding the manual or program, please contact Molly O'Leary, Chief of the Division of Voter Registration, Pennsylvania Department of State, at (717) 787-5280 or [mooleary@state.pa.us](mailto:mooleary@state.pa.us)

Thank you for your participation in the 2008 Student Mock Election. Together, we can help our students better understand their most fundamental right of citizenship and their responsibility to preserve our democracy.

Sincerely,

Pedro A. Cortés  
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Gerald L. Zahorchak  
Secretary of Education

**PENNSYLVANIA  
STUDENT MOCK ELECTION DAY  
October 30, 2008  
Frequently Asked Questions**

**When is the 2008 Pennsylvania Student Mock Election?**

The mock election is to be held on the morning of Thursday, October 30, 2008.

**Who may participate?**

Every student in your school who wishes to participate in the Student Mock Election should be allowed to vote.

**When should I conduct our Student Mock Election?**

Conduct your school's Student Mock Election in the morning and report the results to the Department of State as soon as possible.

**Can we conduct our Student Mock Election on another day?**

Yes, as long as you report your vote totals to the Department of State by 5:00 P.M. on Thursday, October 30, 2008.

**How will students vote in the Student Mock Election?**

There will be three different ballots according to grade level.

**How do I report our Mock Election Results?**

The results can be reported on the reporting form or online at [www.dos.state.pa.us/mockelection](http://www.dos.state.pa.us/mockelection). To report results online you must use your ballot integrity code that will be provided later. We recommend reporting the results in this matter but you can also report them through the following methods: by calling the department; by faxing the reporting form or by e-mailing the results directly to the department by the close of business (5:00 P.M.) on October 30, 2008. The reporting form, ballot integrity code, telephone, fax and email reporting numbers will be provided to you in September.

**What is a ballot integrity code?**

The ballot integrity code is used to verify your school as a participant in the Student Mock Election. As the lead contact person for your school's mock election, you must sign the reporting form and include your school's ballot integrity code when reporting results by any method.

**Please note:** Reported results that do not include either the signature of the lead contact person or the official ballot integrity code will not be included in the official Pennsylvania Student Mock Election results.

## **Suggested Classroom Activities**

# Suggested Mock Election Classroom Activities

## Kindergarten – Grade 3

### Symbols, Choices, & Leadership

#### **Purpose:**

To introduce students to Pennsylvania and American symbols; to explore the differences between individual and group decision making; and, to look at different leadership positions and qualities within our society.

#### **Suggested Activities:**

##### **Symbols**

- Ask students to find Pennsylvania on a map and locate their hometowns.
- Examine Pennsylvania and American symbols like the Liberty Bell, American and Pennsylvania flags or Statue of Liberty. Discuss their meanings.
- Compare and contrast the appearance and meaning of the American and Pennsylvania flags.
- Discuss Pennsylvania state symbols. (See appendix)

##### **Choices**

- Have students create their own ballot and vote on a few typical items of interest like favorite color, food, or television show.
- Discuss the difference between individual and group decision-making.

##### **Leadership**

- Have the class identify and discuss leadership qualities.
- Ask students to name some role models or people they admire; discuss the qualities these leaders possess.
- Discuss the broad range of leadership roles and titles that exist in our society. (President, judges, parents, teachers, coaches, clergy, etc.)
- Play Follow-the-Leader or Simon-Says, and talk to the students about the responsibilities of leadership.

##### **Voter Identification**

- Have students create their own voter identification.
- Voter identification should include a picture of themselves, their name, address, and/or classroom number.

# Suggested Mock Election Classroom Activities

## Grades 4- 6

### Structure, Citizenship & Leadership

#### Purpose:

To understand the organization and structure of federal and state government; to examine the leadership positions and function of each level of government; and, to study the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship.

#### Suggested Activities:

##### Structure

- Examine the three branches of government at the federal and state level. Explore their similarities and differences.
- Review federal and state symbols and discuss their meanings.
- Invite a federal or state official to your school to discuss their roles and responsibilities.
- Take a field trip to local government buildings, Harrisburg, or Washington, D.C. to see government in action.

##### Citizenship

- Examine the history of voting in the United States and Pennsylvania.
- Review the 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and discuss their significance.
- Invite a county election official to discuss the election process and the importance of voting.
- Have students discuss why voting is important.
- Hold a mock election related to something in your class (class song, favorite television show).

##### Leadership

- Explore the current leaders of the three branches of government (Chief Justice, President, Speaker of the House) and explain how their roles are different.
- Compare and contrast the responsibilities of the Governor and the President.
- Review the political leaders in government today and discuss the qualities that make a successful leader.
- Have class discuss leadership qualities of the leaders the class is currently studying (Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Eleanor Roosevelt, Nelson Mandela).

##### Voter Identification

- Have students create their own voter identification.
- Voter identification should include a picture of themselves, their name, address, and/or classroom number.

# **Suggested Mock Election Classroom Activities**

## **Grades 7 - 8**

### **Participants, Issues & Citizenship**

#### **Purpose:**

To introduce students to both the elected and non-elected participants in federal and state government; to familiarize students with the types of political issues that exist today; and to examine how different types of political participants affect political issues.

#### **Suggested Activities:**

##### **Participants**

- **Invite a local official to speak to the class on his or her role as a government official.**
- **Ask students to discuss the roles and responsibilities of various participants in federal and state government. (Elected officials, lobbyists, unions, interest groups, etc.)**
- **Discuss examples of people and groups who are involved in the political process.**
- **Review the candidates of the 2008 Pennsylvania Mock Election.**
- **Have the mock election as a weeklong event and involve things such as voter registration, mock debates, etc.**
- **Contact media for additional coverage of the student mock election.**

##### **Issues**

- Ask students to read the newspaper and find an article on a current political issue.
- Students should read articles and determine the issues being discussed and the political participants involved in the discussion.
- Ask the class to discuss the differences between foreign and domestic policies. Have them distinguish between social and economic policies.
- Ask students to find an issue of interest to them, and write a 1-2 page paper that supports or opposes a particular viewpoint.
- Examine some of today's current issues, and outline how different types of political participants pursue and influence these issues.
- Conduct a class debate on current events related to the election.

##### **Citizenship**

- Examine the history of voting in the United States and Pennsylvania.
- Review the 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the U.S Constitution and discuss their significance
- Invite a county election official to discuss the election process and the importance of voting.
- Have students discuss why voting is important.
- Hold a mock election related to something in your class (class song, favorite television show).

##### **Voter Identification**

- Have students create their own voter identification.
- Voter ID should include a picture of themselves, their name, address, and/or classroom number.

# **Suggested Mock Election Classroom Activities**

## **Grades 9-12**

### **Political Parties, Mass Media, & Voting**

#### **Purpose:**

To introduce students to the function and responsibilities of political parties; explore the role of mass media in our political process; discuss the procedures for and responsibilities of voting; and discuss the manner in which political parties and mass media affect voting.

#### **Suggested Activities:**

##### **Political Parties**

- Ask students to research the various political parties that exist today; ask interested students to volunteer to represent the political parties in a mock election debate in front of the class.
- Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of a two-party political system.
- Invite a local political party official to speak to the class on his or her responsibilities.

##### **Mass Media**

- Pick a night and record the national network news; ask the class to view the program together and discuss how politics and government are covered on television.  
e.g. (look for tone and language of the commentators, the time given to certain issues, and the connection with visual images and commentary)
- Ask students to read a news article and an editorial about an event; discuss the differences between objective and opinion.
- Discuss an issue as a class and examine what role the media has had in influencing the public debate.

##### **Voting**

- Examine the history of voting in the United States; pay particular attention to the 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> amendments to the U.S. Constitution.
- Review recent trends in voter turnout and discuss the implications these trends may have.
- Discuss the roles political parties and mass media have in affecting voting. Could they do more to get people to vote?
- Conduct a voter registration drive for eligible high school students.

# Enhancing Your Student Mock Election Day Program

*The information provided in this program guide can be used to enhance the basic student mock election program. Your school may choose to organize a board of elections, or appoint district election officers, watchers and overseers. In addition, your school may choose to establish voter registration, absentee ballot and voting procedures. These suggestions are meant only as a guide, except for reporting vote totals to the Department of State, and are not required for participation in the Pennsylvania Student Mock Election.*

## *Opening the Polls*

**The mock election is to be held on the morning of October 30, 2008.** In conducting the mock election, be sure to allow sufficient time for all students to vote. Report the results to the Department of State as soon as possible and no later than 5:00 P.M. Reporting forms and instructions will be provided to you in September.

Before the polls open, the election officers should:

- 1) Administer the oath of office to clerks, overseers and each other. The minority inspector swears in the judge. Then the judge swears in the inspectors, the clerks and overseers. No officer may act without taking the oath. Two copies of the oath must be signed;
- 2) Post the “Polling Place” and “Vote Here” signs outside the polling place;
- 3) Post the United States flag outside the polling place;
- 4) Post the instructions and penalties in the voting booths and at least five specimen ballots in and around the polling place;
- 5) Place pens and pencils in all the voting booths;
- 6) Decide which inspector is in charge of the student list, the numbered list of voters, the distribution of ballots to electors and the receipt and deposit of ballots in the ballot box;
- 7) Open the ballot box and remove or destroy any papers inside;
- 8) Secure the empty ballot box; and
- 9) Announce that the polls are open.

## *Voting Procedures*

- 1) The voter must show the proper identification before he/she casts a ballot.
- 2) The voter signs his or her name on the numbered list of voters.
- 3) The inspector marks the master student list indicating that the voter is present to vote.
- 4) The officer in charge of issuing the ballots puts his or her initials on the back of the ballot and gives the initial ballot to the voter.
- 5) The voter marks the ballot in secret, and, before leaving the voting booth, refolds the ballot exactly as it was received.
- 6) The voter shows the ballot to the officer in charge of the ballot box.
- 7) The officer checks to ensure that the initials on the ballot are the same as those of the officer who is initialing the ballots.
- 8) If the ballot is the same, the voter deposits it into the ballot box. If the ballot is not initialed, or if the initials differ, it is declared void and not counted. A new ballot should be submitted to the voter.

### **Closing the Polls**

- 1) Before the polls can be closed, all qualified voters waiting to vote should be permitted to vote.
- 2) After everyone has voted, the polls are officially closed. The officers compare the total number of voters as shown by the voter checklist to the names marked as voting in the district (student list) and the numbered list of voters. The total number of voters is announced and entered on line one of the general return forms.
- 3) If differences exist in the total number of voters, they should be corrected, or else noted on the general return forms.
- 4) The judge announces the total number of ballots spoiled or cancelled and the total number of ballots issued to the electors. These numbers are entered on both copies of the general return forms.
- 5) If any absentee ballots were received, the total is recorded on the general return forms.
- 6) The judge compares the information on the absentee ballot envelope with the absentee ballot voters list. If the information is the same, the judge announces the name of each absentee voter. If the information is

different, the judge declares and marks the absentee ballot void.

7) Watchers and/or overseers may challenge an absentee voter's ballot. The reasons for a challenge must be stated. Examples are:

a) the absentee elector is not qualified;

b) the absentee elector could have voted in person; and,

c) the absentee elector did vote at the polling place some time during the day. All challenged ballots are set aside, unopened and returned with the other materials to the school board of elections. The board must hold hearings to gather testimony and make a decision on challenged ballots.

8) The judge opens the first envelope with the voter's name and address and removes the second envelope with the words "Official Absentee Ballot." He or she places all of these envelopes into a box and mixes them so they cannot be identified. If any of these envelopes is marked, it is declared and marked void and set aside unopened. The total number of void, challenged, and absentee ballots is recorded on the return forms.

9) The total number of all counted absentee ballots is recorded on the general return form under the column "Ballots Cast."

10) All unvoided absentee ballots are then removed from the envelopes and their votes are recorded on the general return forms.

11) The judge places the student list, numbered list of voters, unused ballots, spoiled ballots, absentee voter's envelopes and rejected absentee ballots into a separate envelope and securely seals it before opening the ballot box. He or she announces the total number of ballots received from the school board of elections and records it on the general return forms.

12) The judge unlocks the ballot box and removes all ballots. Each ballot is checked for the officer's initials. If a ballot is not properly marked, it is declared and marked void and set aside.

13) The judge announces the names of the individual candidates and the offices marked on each ballot. All void and blank ballots are recorded on the general return forms. The total number of ballots cast is also recorded on the general return forms.

14) The majority inspector and clerks tally the vote as it is read on the general return forms.

15) After all the votes have been recorded, the officers certify the number of votes cast for each candidate.

16) The general return forms should be completed by recording the total votes cast for each candidate. The forms are signed by each officer and overseer. If an officer refuses to sign them, he or she must provide a written reason on the general return forms.

17) The judge returns one set of the general return forms to the Lead Contact Person and a second set is displayed outside the polling place.

18) The Lead Contact Person reviews the results, completes the notice of official certification, signs his or her name and records the school's ballot integrity code.

19) The Lead Contact Person may fax or e-mail the election results to the Department of State, or can report the results by contacting the department by telephone using the number provided. These numbers will be provided by the Department in September.

# **Voter Registration in Pennsylvania**

# **Voter Qualifications and Voter Registration in Pennsylvania**

## ***Voter Qualifications***

To vote in Pennsylvania, an elector must be 18 years of age on or before the day of the election, a citizen of the United States for at least one month, a resident of the Commonwealth and election district, precinct or division for at least thirty days prior to the election and must be officially registered to vote.

Through the years, voter qualifications have varied. Originally, voting rights were limited in most states to male landowners over 21 years of age. Gradually, in state after state, the link that joined the right to vote with property ownership was broken and other qualifications were introduced.

Voter registration rolls increased to their present size as a result of the adoption of the 15th, 19th and 26th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States:

- 1) The 15th Amendment prohibited limitation of the right to vote on the basis of race;
- 2) The 19th Amendment granted women the right to vote; and,
- 3) The 26th Amendment, adopted in 1971, lowered the voting age qualification from 21 to 18 years of age.

## ***Voter Registration***

Registration is open to any qualified elector up to 30 days before each general, municipal and primary election. In all districts, registration reopens the day after an election. To register to vote in Pennsylvania, an applicant must be at least 18 years of age on or before the day of the next election, a citizen of the United States for at least one month prior to the next election and a resident of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, election district, precinct or division for at least thirty days prior to the election. Applications for voter registration, change of party enrollment, name or address can be completed by mail or in person and are available at the following locations:

- 1) Pennsylvania Department of Transportation photo licensing centers when applying for or renewing a motor vehicle driver's license;
- 2) County Voter Registration Commission offices or at a place designated by the commission;
- 3) County Clerk of Orphans Courts or county marriage license centers;
- 4) Public assistance offices operated by the Pennsylvania Departments of Public Welfare, Health or Labor and Industry;
- 5) Other offices that provide state-funded programs to persons with disabilities;
- 6) Armed Forces Recruiting Center;

- 7) Area Agencies on Aging; and,
- 8) Social Services Offices of the State System of Higher Education;
- 9) Offices of the Bureau of Special Education;
- 10) ADA Complementary Paratransit providers.

Military electors may apply at any time for registration on an official registration application or any form prescribed by the federal government for such purpose. Military electors in actual military service of the United States may vote by absentee ballot.

Voter registration applications must be postmarked or received by the county registration office no later than 30 days prior to election.

# **Election Administration in Pennsylvania**

# **Understanding Pennsylvania's Election Process**

*The Department of State is where the election process begins and ends for candidates running for national or statewide office, U.S. Congress, the Pennsylvania General Assembly, County Court of Common Pleas, or for state party office. Candidates running for these offices must file nomination petitions or papers, report contributions and expenditures or submit change of address or withdrawal notices to the Secretary of the Commonwealth. The Secretary is responsible for administering elections on a statewide basis and certifying the election results.*

## ***The County Board of Elections***

The county board of elections is the organization responsible for the conduct of elections at the county level. Its duties include selecting and equipping polling places; issuing certificates of appointment of poll watchers; making and issuing rules and regulations for the guidance of election officers and voters; training election officers; preparing and publishing all notices of election; and, receiving, canvassing and certifying the election results.

The county board of elections consists of the three county commissioners, or in the case of a "home rule" county, by anyone assigned the duties of the county commissioner. The board may appoint a chief clerk and other assistants as it deems necessary to administer oaths and sign vouchers.

## ***District Election Officers***

On Election Day, the district board of elections supervises the polling place. Each district election board is comprised of one judge of election, one majority inspector and one minority inspector, and may also include clerks and machine inspectors.

In Pennsylvania, the judge and majority and minority inspectors are elected to four-year terms at a municipal election occurring in odd-numbered years. The candidate for inspector receiving the largest vote becomes the majority inspector. The minority inspector is the one receiving the second largest vote. If a new election district is established, the County Court of Common Pleas appoints the first group of election officers.

Each election officer must be a qualified and registered elector of the district, ward or precinct in which he or she is elected. This individual may not run for any of the offices being voted upon at that election except that of district election officer.

The major duties of district election officers include:

- 1) opening and closing the polls;
- 2) posting specimen ballots (at least 5), instruction cards and penalty notices;
- 3) ensuring that only qualified registered electors are allowed to vote;
- 4) maintaining order within the polling place; and,
- 5) tallying the vote after the polls close.

### ***Poll Watchers***

Pennsylvania law also provides that watchers may be present in the polling place during a general election. Watchers are appointed by candidates, political parties or political bodies (independent candidates). Each party or body which has nominated candidates is entitled to appoint three watchers in each election district. Candidates may appoint two watchers per district. Only one watcher from each party or body is allowed in the polling place at any given time. The responsibility of the watcher is to look for any irregularities in the voting procedures.

Watchers have the right to challenge any person making application to vote by requiring proof of the voter's qualifications. A reason for the challenge must be stated. Possible reasons for a challenge may include: a person voted earlier in the day, moved from the precinct, or is not qualified to vote. The election officers decide whether or not a challenged elector is able to vote. After the polls are closed, the watchers are permitted to observe the tabulating and recording of the votes.

Before the actual election, each watcher receives a certificate from the county board of elections, stating his or her name and the name of the candidate, party or political body he or she represents. He or she must present this certificate upon request of the election officers.

### **Overseers**

A procedure specifically mentioned in the Pennsylvania statute, but rarely utilized, is the appointment of overseers. Should five or more registered voters of any election district doubt the integrity of the upcoming election, they have the right to petition the Court of Common Pleas. The court then appoints two overseers to supervise the actions of the election officers.

Overseers must be registered voters of the district and belong to different political parties. They are sworn in by the judge of election at the same time as the other election officers. Overseers are required to be present with the officers in the polling place during the entire election procedure. Like watchers, they may challenge any person making application to vote and question his or her right to vote. If the members of the election board disagree over some matter, the overseers, if in agreement, make the final decision. The overseers are also responsible for certifying the election returns after they have been tallied.

## **Preparations for an Official Election Day in Pennsylvania**

# **Preparations for Election Day**

## ***The Nomination Process***

In Pennsylvania, nominations for public office may be made by political parties, minor political parties and political bodies.

Political parties are responsible for the nomination of most of our elected officials. Legally constituted, they are fundamental to the electoral process in Pennsylvania and in the United States. Pennsylvania defines a political party as “one of whose candidates at the general election next preceding the primary polled in each of at least ten counties of the State not less than two percent of the largest entire vote cast.” These parties have the right to nominate candidates at the primary election and elect delegates to their national convention, as their party rules stipulate.

A candidate of a political party running for a public office must file nomination petitions containing the requisite number of signatures. The number of signatures required varies depending on the office.

Independent candidates, or candidates of political bodies, as they are known in Pennsylvania, may nominate candidates for the general election. Nomination papers for statewide offices must have the signatures of two percent of the largest vote cast for any elected statewide candidate at the preceding election. Should any candidate for this political body poll more than two percent of the votes in ten counties, and poll a total vote equal to at least two percent of the largest entire vote cast in the state at the election, the body is declared a statewide political party.

Minor political parties may nominate candidates utilizing the same process used by independent candidates of political bodies. A minor political party is defined as a political party (meaning it has met the requirements of a political party specified above) whose statewide registration is less than 15 percent of the combined statewide registration for all statewide political parties as of the close of the registration period immediately preceding the most recent election.

All candidates running for state, federal or political party office in Pennsylvania must file a candidate’s affidavit, which states that they will abide by the Pennsylvania Election Code.

## ***Notice of Election***

The county board of elections is required to publish a notice of election not earlier than ten days, and no later than three days before the election. Printed in at least two newspapers in the county, it must include the offices to be elected in the election, the names of the candidates, the text of all constitutional amendments, the locations of the polling places, the date and hours of the election and all state or local ballot questions. In election years in which federal candidates appear of the ballot, it must also include a notice of which polling places are accessible to the elderly (65 and older) and voters with disabilities. Such notices may also contain a specimen ballot.

### ***The Ballot***

In order to keep the ballot secret and give all voters an equal opportunity to vote for every candidate, the following steps are taken:

- 1) Official ballots are of uniform paper quality, size, color and inking so that no individual's ballot can be identified;
- 2) Official ballots are printed at public expense and not by individuals;
- 3) The names of all candidates for the same office are on the same ballot so the voter is selecting from the same list of candidates;
- 4) Official ballots are not distributed until election day and then only distributed in the polling place by the election officers;
- 5) All voters must vote in secret; and
- 6) Only official ballots are counted.

This system of ensuring secrecy of the ballot is essentially the Australian Ballot system. It was introduced in the United States in the 1880s and quickly spread throughout the states.

Uniform marking of the ballot is another security measure to ensure that an individual's ballot cannot be identified. According to Pennsylvania law, a voter is to mark his or her ballot by placing a cross or a check in the square opposite the name of the candidate of his or her choice for each office. If the name of the candidate of his or her choice is not on the ballot, the voter may write in a candidate under the office on the ballot.

If a ballot is marked with something other than the above description, the judge of elections decides whether or not that ballot should be counted. If, however, the county board of elections disagrees with the precinct returns, its decision prevails. That decision can be appealed if three qualified voters petition the Court of Common Pleas. In this case, the decision of the judge of the court is controlling. Petitioning for a recount is a very lengthy and detailed process.

In addition to paper ballots, Pennsylvania also utilizes the voting machine and electronic voting systems. The General Assembly authorized the use of voting machines in 1929 and electronic voting systems in 1980. For a county to change from paper ballots to machines or an electronic system, the county election board must submit the request to the voters in the form of a ballot question.

### ***Voter Identification***

Those who are voting in an election district for the first time must show a valid form of identification.

#### ***Approved Forms of Photo Identification***

- PA driver's license or ID card issued by PennDOT
- ID issued by any other Commonwealth Agency
- ID issued by the U.S. Government
- U.S. Passport
- U.S. Armed Forces ID
- Student ID
- Employee ID

*Approved forms of non-photo identification (ID must include the name and address of the voter)*

- Voter's Identification card issued by the voter registration commission
- Non –photo ID issued by the Commonwealth
- Non – photo ID issued by the U.S Government
- Firearm permit
- Current utility bill
- Current bank statement
- Current paycheck
- Government check

### ***The Polling Place***

The county board of elections is required to select and equip all polling places. The election district officers are responsible for opening and closing the polls, conducting the election and maintaining order throughout the day. Federal law requires that all polling places be accessible to the elderly and voters with disabilities.

Only election officers, clerks, watchers, overseers, persons in the process of voting and peace officers are allowed in the polling place. All others must remain at least ten feet from the polling place.

### ***Absentee Voting***

Absentee voting is provided by law in Pennsylvania for certain categories of voters, such as electors in the military or merchant marines; electors away from their municipality; electors who are physically ill or disabled; hospitalized veterans; county employees who cannot vote on election day because of election-related duties; and, persons who cannot attend the polls due to observance of a religious holiday.

Absentee voters must request an absentee ballot application from the county board of elections by mail, telephone or in person. Once the application is approved, the county sends the elector an official absentee ballot. This ballot must then be completed and returned by 5:00 p.m. the Friday before the election. However, in Presidential election years, federal ballots for those electors voting pursuant to federal law may be accepted up until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day for the offices of President and Vice President of the United States.

### ***Opening the Polls***

For every election, the polls in Pennsylvania open at 7:00 A.M. and remain open until 8:00 P.M.. The district election officers, clerks and overseers are required to report to the polls at least one-half hour before the polls open and remain there until all votes have been tallied.

The judge of elections is required to keep a “record of assisted voters.” For each voter needing assistance, the judge must enter the voter's name, a statement of the facts which entitled him or her to receive assistance and the name of the person furnishing assistance.

### ***Voting Procedures***

Voting procedures are designed to ensure that every person who has the right to vote has the opportunity to vote in secret and that no one is permitted to vote who is not qualified.

In the election, counties which use paper ballots number each ballot consecutively. The ballot stubs then show the total number of ballots issued to voters. To ensure that the ballot the voter deposits into the box is the same one he or she received, the number is also located on the

ballot. The inspector checks the number on the ballot with the number on the stub. If they are the same, the voter takes off the identifying number and deposits his or her ballot into the box. This system of numbered ballots is difficult to prepare, so the mock election will use the system of initialing ballots.

Each student must show an appropriate form of identification if it is the first time that he/she is appearing to vote in that school (school ID card if available, or ID cards that are made by the students for the Mock Election). If the student is unable to show an appropriate form of identification, (i.e. left it at home, absent the day the ID card for the Mock Election was made, etc.), he/she should be given the opportunity to cast a Provisional Ballot.

### ***Provisional Ballots***

A Provisional Ballot can be cast by any individual that is prohibited from casting a conventional ballot for the following reasons: 1.) The individual is not able to show the proper identification when required 2.) An individual's name does not appear on the general register, 3.) An individual who is voting as a result of a federal or state court order. Provisional Ballots are not counted at the polling place, but are returned to the County Board of Elections where the validity of that ballot is determined

#### Provisional Voting Procedures

- The individual must complete and sign the Provisional Ballot Affidavit Envelope in the presence of the Judge of Elections and the Minority Inspector **before** the ballot is completed.
- The Judge of Elections and Minority Inspector must sign the Provisional Voter Affidavit portion of the envelope **before** the ballot is completed.
- The individual is to be directed to an accessible voting area in the polling place to complete the ballot in private
- After the ballot is completed, the individual must place the ballot in the Secrecy Envelope and place the Secrecy Envelope in the Provisional Ballot Affidavit Envelope.
- The individual must seal the Provisional Ballot Affidavit Envelope and sign the **front** of the Provisional Ballot Affidavit Envelope.
- The individual must return the completed materials to the Judge of Elections.
- The Judge of Elections must affix the Ballot Identification Number to the Provisional Ballot Affidavit Envelope in the space provided and give the receipt with the corresponding number to the individual (to be determined by the individual schools)
- The Judge of Elections must inform the individuals of how they can determine whether their Provisional Ballots were counted.
- The Judge of Elections must indicate why the individual cast a Provisional Ballot in the space provided in the Provisional Ballot Affidavit Envelope.

### ***Alterative Ballots***

A voter assigned to an inaccessible polling place who has a disability or is elderly (i.e., is age 65 or older), **upon advance request of the voter**, must be provided with an alternative means for casting a ballot on the day of the election in the form of an Alternative Ballot. An Alternative Ballot is a paper ballot for which a qualified voter must apply to the county board of elections at least seven days before Election Day. If approved, a voter may complete his/her Alternative Ballot at any time before the close of the polls on Election Day. However, the county board of elections must receive the completed Alternative Ballot (either through the

U.S. mail or by hand-delivery to the offices of the county board of elections no later than 8:00 P.M. on Election Day.

### ***Emergency Absentee Ballots***

Emergency Absentee Ballot applications are available at the county board of elections office. The county board of elections will process and approve only those emergency absentee ballots applications that have been completed and signed by the applicant elector before a notary public. Emergency absentee ballot applications must be submitted to the county board of elections between 5:00 P.M. on the Tuesday before Election Day and 5:00 P.M. on the Friday before Election Day.

### ***Closing the Polls***

After the polls are officially closed, only the election officers, clerks, watchers and overseers are permitted in the area. All votes, including absentee ballots, must be counted and the results publicly posted. Once this is completed, the official duties of the district election officers are concluded.

### ***HAVA Title III Complaints***

- Any person who believed that HAVA Title III complaint has occurred, is occurring, or is about to occur, may file a formal complaint with the Pennsylvania Department of State.

#### **Examples of Title III Complaints:**

- An individual has been denied the right to cast a Provisional Ballot as required by HAVA.
- Required voting information has not been posted at the polling place on Election Day as mandated by HAVA.
- An individual required to show appropriate identification was not asked to provide a valid form of identification.

***For more information on elections, campaign finance, and voter registration, please visit the Department of State's website at [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us).***

# **Appendix 1**

## **Forms**

Election Officers' Oaths

"I \_\_\_\_\_ DO SWEAR (OR  
AFFIRM) That I will as **JUDGE** duly attend the ensuing Election during the continuance thereof, and in cooperation with the inspectors, faithfully carry on the same; that I will not give my consent to the admission of any person to vote, except such as I firmly believe to be registered and entitled to vote at such Election, according to the provisions of the Constitution and Laws of the Commonwealth and School, and that I will use my best endeavors to prevent any fraud, deceit, or abuse in carrying on the same, and that I will make a true and perfect return of the said election, and will at all times impartially and faithfully perform my duty respecting the same, to be the best of my judgement and ability; and that I am not directly, or indirectly, interested in any bet or wager on the result of this Election."

Sworn (or Affirmed) and subscribed \_\_\_\_\_ Judge of the  
this \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ School  
Of \_\_\_\_\_, 2004 before me \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ of Pennsylvania  
Minority Inspector \_\_\_\_\_

"I \_\_\_\_\_ DO SWEAR (OR  
AFFIRM) That I will as a **OVERSEER** of the Election truly and faithfully perform my duties respecting the same, to the best of my judgement and ability; and as Overseer, I will carry out my duties according to the provisions of the Constitution and Laws of the Commonwealth and School."

Sworn (or Affirmed) and subscribed \_\_\_\_\_  
this \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ Overseer of the  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2004 before me \_\_\_\_\_ School  
\_\_\_\_\_ of Pennsylvania  
Judge of Election \_\_\_\_\_

"I \_\_\_\_\_ DO SWEAR (OR AFFIRM)

That I will as a **CLERK** attend the ensuing Election during the continuance thereof. That I will carefully and truly record the number of votes that shall be given for each candidate at the Election as often as his/her name shall be read to me by the Judge or Inspector thereof and in all things, truly, impartially and faithfully perform my duty respecting the same, to the best of my judgement and ability and that I am not directly, or indirectly, interested in any bet or wager on the result of this Election."

Sworn (or Affirmed) and subscribed

This \_\_\_\_\_ day

\_\_\_\_\_ (Majority-Minority) Inspector's Clerk of the

Of \_\_\_\_\_, 2004 before me

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge of Election

\_\_\_\_\_ School  
of Pennsylvania

"I \_\_\_\_\_ DO SWEAR (OR

AFFIRM) That I will as an **INSPECTOR**, duly attend the ensuing Election during the continuance thereof, and that I will not admit any person to vote except such as I firmly believe to be registered and entitled to vote at such Election, according to the provisions of the Constitution and Laws of the Commonwealth and School. That I will not vexatiously delay or refuse to permit any person to vote whom I shall believe to be entitled to vote as aforesaid. That I will make a true and perfect return of the said Election and that I will, in all things, truly, impartially, and faithfully perform my duties therein to the best of my judgement and ability and that I am not directly, or indirectly, interested in any bet or wager on the result of this Election."

Sworn (or Affirmed) and subscribed

this \_\_\_\_\_ day

\_\_\_\_\_ (Majority-Minority) Inspector's Clerk of the

Of \_\_\_\_\_, 2004 before me

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge of Election

\_\_\_\_\_ School  
of Pennsylvania

## WATCHER CREDENTIALS

**TO THE ELECTION BOARD:**

In accordance with the provisions of the Mock Election Code, the undersigned hereby

appoints \_\_\_\_\_

who resides at \_\_\_\_\_

in the county of \_\_\_\_\_

of \_\_\_\_\_, State of Pennsylvania and who is qualified

to vote from this address, to act as a watcher from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ at

the Mock Election to be held on \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ School.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Watcher)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Appoint Authority)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Class of which Watcher is a member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title of Appointing Authority)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Election Authority)

## Challenges: Elector's Affidavit

The following affidavit is to be used by a voter in your school whose residence in the school is challenged.

I \_\_\_\_\_ being duly sworn, depose and say that I am a residence of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that I am a student of the \_\_\_\_\_ school; and that I am qualified to vote in the Meck Election, that I am the identical person whose name is setforth on said registration form.

Date of Elections \_\_\_\_\_





**Pennsylvania**  
**2008 Student Mock Election**

**210 North Office Building**

**Harrisburg, PA 17120**

**717-787-5280**

**Email address: [www.dos.state.pa.us/mockelection](http://www.dos.state.pa.us/mockelection)**

