Report from the High School Voter Registration and Education Program

November 15, 2020

Since mid-July, we have been organizing, communicating and working with eight high schools in Santa Fe and one high school in Pojoaque. Approximately every two weeks we sent short emails with timely information starting with the links for on-line voting registration and requesting an absentee ballot, and videos on “why vote”. Across time, we added emails with ballot information (how to get your sample ballot), the LWVSF candidate information, and information sheets on importance of voting. Within each email we invited every teacher to contact us if they wanted us to visit their classrooms on-line. I sent a reminder email to individual teachers’ emails periodically. I believe they were more likely to respond to one person than a group. Indeed, several teachers appreciated the individual emails.

Accomplishments:

11 out of the 12 teachers communicated with us via email. Five of the teachers scheduled on-line visits to their classrooms, one school scheduled live visits. Campbell Leonard did the live visits at Santa Fe Prep. She also did several on-line classroom visits, as did I. In addition to voter registration and ballot review, a few teachers asked us to discuss the meaning and importance of the census. After a brief explanation, we encouraged the students to go home and make sure their families completed the census.

For the few emails, we asked the teachers for a tally of students registered and we didn’t get much response. However, two teachers said all the seniors who were eligible to vote are registered (Santa Fe High, Santa Fe Prep).

Several students volunteered to teach their peers how to register online. Several students committed to registering family members.

Upcoming plans:

This coming week, I am sending the teachers an email with a request to give the students a **survey** of four questions: 1) are you registered to vote?; 2) did you vote?; 3) did you help someone else register to vote?; 4) let us know how the election experience felt for you.

In consultation with Randi Lowenthal, we have made tentative plans for the upcoming months. We welcome any other ideas.

Our plans for January: review bills introduced into the state session.

Our plans for March: hold opportunities for voter registration.

If you would like copies of the emails or the list of participating teachers and schools let me know.

Anne McDonald Culp

Chair, High School Voter Registration and Education Project

League of Women Voters Santa Fe