

Teacher's Guide for Civics Month 2004 /Georgia Student Mock Election October 18-29, 2004

“ . . . the only title in our democracy superior to that of President is the title of citizen.”

-Former President Jimmy Carter from his Farewell Address, 1981

The office of Secretary of State Cathy Cox (SOS), State Superintendent of Schools Kathy Cox (DOE), Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB), as well as the Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) of the University of Virginia and the Georgia Project for Active Civic Education (Georgia PACE) are proud to provide Georgia educators the Civics Month 2004 /Georgia Student Mock Election (CM/GSME) program. This long-running educational project is designed to promote active citizenship among students in Georgia's public, private, and home schools in **grades K-12**. The emphasis of this program is on one basic responsibility or role of the citizen: **voting**.

While the Georgia Student Mock Election (GSME) is one activity during Civics Month, it **should not be conducted in isolation**. Lessons, activities, and resources are being provided by several familiar and experienced organizations to assist educators in teaching democratic concepts involved in citizenship, elections, and voting. We hope that your classroom and/or school will join other schools in Georgia and across the nation to participate in this exciting and educational opportunity.

Exciting Changes to Civics Month 2004/Georgia Student Mock Election!

Just as adult voters have experienced a change in the voting process, Georgia students will change the way they vote in the statewide mock election this year. And, educators will find new resources to assist them in teaching about government, elections, and voting. Here is a brief look at the changes. Detailed descriptions are below.



- **Students will be able to vote directly online.** Teachers may encourage students to vote at home, at school, or during a specified class period via computer.
- **Individual teachers may register** for the project instead of one person per school. Individual students do not need to register.
- **Voting ends on ***THURSDAY, October 28th at 7pm ET.** Results will be announced on the Civics Month Web site on Friday, October 29th.
- Additional resources from the Youth Leadership Initiative and a youth organization, Georgia PACE, as well as our long-standing partner, the **National Student Parent Mock Election (NSPME)** will be available via the Civics Month 2004 Web page. Georgia DOE, SOS, and GPB will provide lessons and resources as usual. Resources will be added throughout September and mid-October.
- On October 13th at 11am a **debate** among Young Republicans, Young Democrats, and Young Libertarians from state colleges will be video-streamed by Georgia Public Broadcasting as well as on satellite channel 430. Visit the Civics Month Web site for the Web site address (URL) for the debate. Or, ask your media specialist for information on how to access satellite channel 430.



- Younger students in grades k-8 are invited to participate in “My Vote Counts!” poster and in which students should illustrate and describe why voting is important. Again, visit the Civics Month Web site for guidelines and updated information.

Georgia Student Mock Election Registration and Voting

Civics Month **voting** will take place, October 18-28, 2004. For the first time, Georgia students will be able to cast their mock

election votes directly online. Starting September 7th, teachers may register their classrooms/schools to participate in the GSME by accessing the Civics Month Web page http://www.sos.state.ga.us/civics_month and clicking on the link to YLI's registration page. Schools wishing to participate in the GSME must register *at least 48 hours* before students may begin voting. You may wish to review YLI's User's Guide (online) for answers to most questions you may have about the registration and voting process.

Registration ends October 27th. Because millions of Georgia students and others around the country will be voting during this time, teachers are strongly encouraged to *allow students to vote early*. Voting may begin on October 18th at 8am. Polls close on October 28th at 7pm, which *is a different day/time than in previous years*. Results will be available online on the Secretary of State's (Civics Month) Web site on Friday, October 29th.



Prior to Voting

Check Out Online Resources

The mock election is an important part of Civics Month and the program offers a number of helpful resources and activities. Online resources including lesson plans, news articles, information on political parties, and much more are available at http://www.sos.state.ga.us/civics_month. **Teachers are strongly urged to use these resources as a basis of discussion with students about candidates and issues prior to voting.** One of the goals of CM/GSME is not only to expose students to voting at an early age, but also to encourage them to *be informed citizens prior to voting*.

Know Your District Number Before You Vote



Another significant change is that online mock ballots will contain elections for President/Vice President, U.S. Senate Race, and U.S. Congressional race by district. The online ballot will default to the Congressional district of your school. To vote in their parent's district, students should obtain their U.S. Congressional district number (1-13) **before casting their vote**. Students may obtain their district number by asking their parents to read it from their voter registration card or by going online and entering their home zip codes at www.vote-smart.org.

Also, students will need a unique user name to log onto the system. Students may create their own when they log in or teachers may choose to assign a code that is already in use by the student. Examples include a student ID number, lunchroom ID number, etc. so that the teacher can see who has voted and who has not (but *not how* they voted). Again the teacher must register at www.sos.state.ga.us/civics_month before students may begin voting. (If you or someone from your school has already registered at the YLI site, your school is also registered for the mock election).

Ballot Options and Security

There will be two ballots, one for elementary students and one for middle and high school students. Each will contain the same candidates as well as similar issues to discuss and vote on.

YLI has several security measures in place, such as school ID's and individual student user names. However, the greatest "security" to the mock voting will be the classroom teacher who, again, will be able to monitor who has voted, who has not voted and how long each student has been online. While security is crucial to local, state, and national elections, remember that this mock election is primarily a teaching tool.

Let's Set a Record in Georgia!

GSME results will be posted on the Secretary of State Web site on Friday, October 29th. In addition, we will provide the results to the General Assembly as well as the Georgia delegation to the U.S. Congress to express student views on candidates and issues. We will provide our elected officials with voting totals from individual schools as well as the aggregate vote. Be sure to participate so that your students' voices are

included and that your school is represented in a statewide student voting program. (Note: schools participating in Kids Voting are not expected to participate in the Georgia Student Mock Election but may take advantage of the Civics Month 2004 web resources.) Georgia votes will also appear with votes from other students in other states on the Youth Leadership Initiative's Web site (www.youthleadership.net) and the National Student Parent Mock Election Web site (<http://www.nationalmockelection.org>).



Additional Civics Month 2004 Activities

Highlighted Resources

Teachers often hold a mock election in their schools that simulates adult voting. While this is strongly encouraged, it should not be conducted in isolation. Lessons plans, materials, resources, other suggested activities will be provided on the Civics Month Web page so that teachers can put concepts of voting and elections within the context of responsibilities of citizenship, etc. A **“Resource of the Day”** will highlight a lesson, unit, activity or resource for teachers. Visit our Web site often for updates and new ideas to implement in the classroom.

Public Service Announcement (UPDATED 9-15-04)

During late September through October, a Public Service Announcement (PSA) will air on Georgia Public Broadcasting as well as other television stations and local access channels in the State. This 30-second spot is designed to encourage voting among young people age 16-25. If you would like to air this spot on a closed-circuit system (i.e. for morning announcements, etc.), you may tape or download the PSA, featuring the student government presidents from UGA and Georgia Tech, via the **Georgia Public Broadcasting Education satellite network** (channels 410, 420, and 430) Contact your school's media specialist for information. By October, the 30-second PSA will be available to see or download on this site. If you do not have access to the satellite network, contact Chiyana Reaves at the Capitol Education Center at 404-463-7714 or creaves@sos.state.ga.us to request a request a VHS copy. Supplies are very limited. For more information on the satellite broadcast or web version, GPB Education (404-685-2550 or toll free 888-501-8960) or by email to Patrice Weaver (pweaver@gpb.org) or Amy Turner (aturner@gpb.org).

Debate

On October 13 at 11 am, Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) will broadcast a one (1) hour debate that will be video streamed live and archived in GPB's online library. Three college students representing three political parties (Young Republicans, Democrats, and Libertarians) will debate issues important to young Georgians. A panel of four high school journalism/broadcast students will offer questions for the debate. The audience will be comprised of high school students. Visit the Civics Month Web site for more details as it becomes available.

Poster Contest



Younger students in grades k-8 are invited to submit a poster about voting. Specifications and deadline information can be found on the Civics Month Web site after September 14.

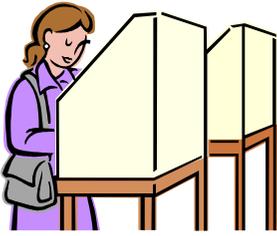
Contact Us!

For questions or information about Civics Month 2004/Georgia Student Mock Election, you may call 404-463-7720 or call/email Tracie Murray, 404-463-7713 / tmurray@sos.state.ga.us; or Stephanie Caywood, 404-463-7715 / scaywood@sos.state.ga.us in the office of Secretary of State; or, Bill Cranshaw, 404-651-7271 / wcransha@doe.k12.ga.us at the Georgia Department of Education.

If you have questions about the voting process or the ballot, contact YLI at Toll Free 866.514.8389 or by email: ylihhelp@virginia.edu.

Technical Assistance

If you experience technical problems while trying to register or vote, please contact **your school's technical support person first**. We find that most technical issues can be solved at that level. If the problem cannot be resolved, you may contact Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) for technical assistance by telephone toll free at 1-866-514-8389 or online at YLHhelp@Virginia.edu.



Online voting by individual students is strongly encouraged, however, teachers from schools that are unable to vote online may submit vote totals in each race/question to YLI by telephone toll free at 1-866-514-8389 or email at YLIhelp@Virginia.edu. Vote totals may also be faxed to the Office of Secretary of State at 404-463-7716. Again, **online voting is strongly encouraged**. *Schools submitting votes via telephone, email or fax must tally votes before submitting.*

Final Note

On the next few pages, you will find a planning calendar with important dates and a few suggested activities. In addition, we have included a detailed flyer for teachers and other educators and (on the reverse side) a flyer to post in school to build interest in Civics Month 2004/Georgia Student Mock Election among your students.

Civics Month 2004/Georgia Student Mock Election is a fun way to engage students in the voting process. Studies have shown that the more students are exposed to voting and the discussion of candidates and issues, the more likely they will be active voters as adults. Thank you for all of your efforts!

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Calendar

September 2004

www.sos.state.ga.us/civics_month

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
Activity level codes: Elementary School = ES Middle School = MS High School = HS		<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>7</u> Civics Month 2004 Web site launches. Teachers register to participate in the GSME thru Oct. 27	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> Teachers: gather resources and lessons.
<u>13</u> Check Web site for Resource of the Day	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u> Upper ES, MS, HS Review Civics Month Web site for news articles and sample discussion questions. Use these for class discussion. _	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u> ES, MS Lead a discussion on why voting is important. Students who enter the Civics Month Poster & Essay Contest should consider this question carefully.
<u>20</u> Check Web site for Resource of the Day	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> HS Ask students to make a chart showing the platform (where they stand on the issues) of political parties. Compare and contrast these views.	<u>24</u>
<u>27</u> Check Web site for Resource of the Day	<u>28</u> Upper ES, MS, HS_ Assign students to watch campaign commercials during the week. Ask them to write a review or discuss in class. How did the commercials portray each candidate?	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	

(over)

October 2004

www.sos.state.ga.us/civics_month

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
				<u>1</u> Upper ES, MS, HS Have students go to the Civics Month Web page to find other fun & informative Web sites on elections & voting
<u>4</u> Check Web site for Resource of the Day	<u>5</u> <i>Last day to register to vote in the (adult) General Election</i>	<u>6</u> Upper ES, MS, HS Ask students to write a list of questions that they would like to ask a young voter. Discuss some of these issues in class to prepare students to watch next week's debate.	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>11</u> <i>Columbus Day</i>	<u>12</u> Check Web site for Resource of the Day	<u>13</u> 8th-12th grades Student Voices 2004: Issues Debate - 11am via web-stream or satellite channel 430	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u> Prepare for voting by providing a sample ballot for students to review and discuss. Answer any questions students may have about the mock election process or issues.
<u>18</u> Online Georgia Student Mock Election <u>VOTING</u> begins.	<u>19</u> Check Web site for Resource of the Day <u>VOTING</u>	<u>20</u> <u>VOTING</u>	<u>21</u> <u>VOTING</u>	<u>22</u> <u>VOTING</u>
<u>25</u> Check Web site for Resource of the Day <u>VOTING</u>	<u>26</u> <u>VOTING</u>	<u>27</u> Last day to register to vote in the GSME www.sos.state.ga.us/civics_month <u>VOTING</u>	<u>28</u> **GSME Voting ends at 7pm ET. All votes must be cast by that time. Georgia votes will be submitted to National Student Parent Mock Election www.nationalmockelection.org). Last Day to Vote	<u>29</u> GSME Results posted on Civics Month Web site. Georgia votes also counted in YLI's national mock election (www.youthleadership.net).

<u>Nov. 1</u>	<u>Nov. 2</u> (Presidential) General Election (Kids Voting communities vote)	<u>Nov. 3</u> Election Wrap Up; Compare your students' votes with those of the adult election. Then, discuss what happens next (electoral college, transition time of candidates)		
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Thank you! Please send comments about the program or success stories from your experience to cec@sos.state.ga.us.