I Educate
I Participate

2018 Midterm U.S. Congressional Election Voter Education Guide
Dear CEC Member,

With Election Day quickly approaching, CEC is pleased to provide you with *I Educate, I Participate: 2018 U.S. Midterm Congressional Election Voter Education Guide*, your resource to the upcoming elections.

As special educators, it is our role to promote civic responsibility and participation in our democracy. To exemplify this, CEC has unveiled its “I Educate, I Participate” initiative to illustrate the strong voice of special educators as active participants in our society.

The 2018 U.S. midterm elections are almost here. CEC has created this nonpartisan guide to help you make informed decisions at the polls and develop lesson plans for the burgeoning citizens in your classrooms. “I Educate I Participate” is designed to promote civic responsibility and participation in our democracy.

While CEC does not take a position supporting or opposing any candidate or political party, we do want to provide members with general information on the election, voter registration information, and classroom resources.

Together we can make a difference,

Deborah A. Ziegler  
Director  
Policy and Advocacy Services
9 Key Features in the Guide

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**Voter Registration Information**

Each state has different deadlines to register to vote for the 2018 midterm election on November 8, 2018. Register to vote in these 3 easy steps:

2. Fill out the form in its entirety.
3. Click submit! (or mail it to the address provided).

**Find your Polling Place**

Know where to go to vote on election day. Your polling place has been designated based on where you live. To find it, follow these steps:

2. Type your address into the sidebar on the left for personalized voting information.
3. Go vote!
U.S. Congressional Midterm Elections – Nov. 8th

By the Numbers:
- **All** 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives are up for election.
- 35 seats in the U.S. Senate are up for election.

Current Make-up of the 115th Congress

U.S. Senate

U.S. House of Representatives

Key:  
- Red: Republican  
- Blue: Democrat  
- Purple: Independent  
- White: Vacant

U.S. Congressional SEATS UP for Election and Predictions

*Please refer to [www.CookPolitical.com](http://www.CookPolitical.com) for up-to-date information on current predictions due to the dynamic nature of Congressional Races.*
When familiarizing yourself with U.S. Congressional candidates it is important to use multiple sources to obtain a robust and thorough perspective. This guide lists two sources that are easy-to-use but, be sure to expand your search for other credible resources. The last page of this guide has resources to facilitate your search.

The website www.VoteSmart.org has an interactive user interface that promotes a “citizen's right to the facts” with a dynamic and intuitive platform.

The website www.Balletopedia.org lists information in an encyclopedic style which lends itself to traditional research and comparison. The provided link sends you to a state map. From there, click on the state, then the government office to find out candidates’ positions (e.g. Idaho → U.S. House → Raul Labrador or Florida → U.S. Senate → Bill Nelson).
GENERAL ADVICE

▪ Log on https://townhallproject.com/ to find the location of your city’s town hall.
▪ Invite colleagues to attend.
▪ Do your homework on the candidates and the issues.
▪ Engage both candidates equally.
▪ Get there early and get organized.
▪ Record everything.
▪ Create your own media strategy for the event.

3 SIMPLE STEPS TO PARTICIPATING IN A TOWN HALL

Before the Town Hall
1. The first priority is to find out when and where the Town Hall will be held. Hold preparation meetings among your group. Do your homework on the candidates and the issues. Develop your questions and media strategy.

During the Town Hall
2. Maximize your Town Hall experience. Arrive early and get organized! Find the MoC and make your presence known. Speak out on the issues. Ask candidates questions about their position on your issues. Lastly, be polite, but persistent. Record and share everything.

After the Town Hall
3. After the Town Hall execute your strategy and reach out to the press. Share your experience, images, and videos with your networks to get a buzz going. Be sure to thank your MoC and remind them that one Town Hall is not enough, and you look forward to future opportunities to engage.
CEC Policy Priorities

Education Appropriations

CEC urges the U.S. Congress to:

▪ Support education and early intervention funding that matches the needs of children and youth with disabilities and/or gifts and talents, their families, and the professionals who work on their behalf by providing increased federal investments to the:
  □ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
  □ National Center for Special Education Research, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.
  □ Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act.

Keep Public Funds in Public Education

CEC urges the U.S. Congress to:

▪ Support efforts that maintain and enhance the use of public funds for public education and services offered through public school districts.
▪ Oppose the use of public funds for families to access private education through private school vouchers, tuition tax credits, direct tuition payments, taxpayer savings accounts, scholarships, and portability of public funds to private education entities for all students, including students with disabilities, as they are contrary to the best interests of students and their families, the public school system, local communities, and taxpayers.

Social and Emotional Learning, Positive Climate, and Mental Health Supports

CEC urges the U.S. Congress to:

▪ Ensure teachers and providers are prepared to implement evidenced-based practices.
▪ Focus on the positive and productive culture and climate in public schools and early childhood programs.
▪ Ensure safe and respectful learning environments for all children and youth.
▪ Remedy the national lack of access to mental health services.
▪ Require an interdisciplinary approach reinforcing partnerships.

Special Education Teacher and Early Intervention Provider Shortages

CEC urges the U.S. Congress to:

▪ Strengthen the recruitment, preparation and retention of education and early childhood personnel.
▪ Diversify the teacher workforce.
Sample Ballots

Visit the U.S. government election website to see the election ballot for your state.

Step by Step instructions.

1. Click the URL.

2. Select the state you wish to learn more about.

3. Search through the state’s webpage to find the midterm ballot.

4. Read about the candidates on the ballot running for the U.S. Congress in the midterm election.
Lesson Plans about Voting, Elections, and Civic Engagement
For K-12 Educators

More Than Mock Elections

Listening With Respect to Competing Ideas

Becoming an Informed Voter: Preparing for the General Election

Civic Engagement and How Students Can Get Involved
Web Resources

CEC Resources

**CEC'S Legislative Action Center**  
http://www.cqrcengage.com/cek/?2  
Find information about your officials with ease by simply typing your zip code.

**CEC's Policy Insider**  
http://www.policyinsider.org/  
Up-to-date news about the federal special and gifted education and early intervention policy through the Policy Insider Blog and Digest. Sign-up to today to receive weekly e-mail updates!

Classroom Resources

**Library of Congress**  
http://www.loc.gov/  
The Library of Congress is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution and serves as the research arm of Congress. There are resources for children and teachers on civics, social studies, and history.

**The National Archives- Digital Classroom**  
http://www.archives.gov/education/  
The Digital Classroom is the National Archives' gateway for resources about primary sources, activities and training for educators and students.

**Smithsonian Museum of American History**  
http://americanhistory.si.edu/vote/votingmachine.html  
Vote: The Machinery of Our Democracy.
Political News

**Politico**
http://www.politico.com/
*Politico* covers the politics of Capitol Hill and of the Midterm elections, and the business of Washington lobbying and advocacy.

**The Hill**
http://www.thehill.com/
The *Hill* covers congress, politics, political campaigns and the federal government.

**The Cook Political Report**
https://www.cookpolitical.com/
The *Cook Political Report* is an independent, nonpartisan newsletter that analyzes elections and campaigns.

**Education Week: Politics K-12 Blog**
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/
*Education Week*’s blog coverage of education in politics.

**LegiStorm**
http://www.legistorm.com/
*LegiStorm* is a fully integrated, web-based platform for government affairs professionals who need to accurately identify congressional staff, monitor activity on Capitol Hill, and engage with members and staff.

Voter Resources

**Voter Registration Deadlines**
http://www.longdistancevoter.org/voter_registration_deadlines#.UEduFSIfsq4
Deadlines for voter registration and absentee ballot request.

**Project VoteSmart**
http://www.votesmart.org/
Election, candidate, and campaign information on federal, state, and local elections.