

DANIEL DROMM

COUNCIL MEMBER
25TH DISTRICT

CHAIR
Education



**THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF NEW YORK**

BENJAMIN J. KALLOS

COUNCIL MEMBER
5TH DISTRICT

CHAIR
Governmental Operations

May 19, 2014

Chancellor Carmen Fariña
Tweed Courthouse, 52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Fariña,

We are writing to you as chairs of the Education and Governmental Operations Committees to ask that you implement a "Citywide Senior Year Voter Registration Pilot," a proposal for which is attached.

The Young Adult Voter Registration Act (YAVRA) requires the Department of Education (DOE) "shall provide applications for registration and enrollment, and may assist in the execution of such applications" and "shall deliver such voter registration form to each graduating student at the same time and in the same manner as it delivers diplomas to each such student."

According to the School Demographics and Accountability Snapshot for school year 2013-14, there are 73,790 high school seniors. If they were all registered along with their soon to be graduating peers 327,537 public school graduates would be eligible to vote in 2017, the next municipal election. By 2021, public school graduates eligible to vote would grow to 630,166 which would mean nearly as many 18 to 26 year old public school graduates would be eligible to vote as voted for mayor in the 2013 election.

The "Citywide Senior Year Voter Registration Pilot" proposes a timeline and specific steps for implementation that will provide a baseline from which we can continue to improve voter registration efforts on an annual basis. Please help enfranchise 73,790 high school seniors by providing your authorization so that this program can be implemented for this school year.

Regards,

A stylized, handwritten signature of Daniel Dromm in black ink.

Daniel Dromm, Chair
Education Committee

A handwritten signature of Ben Kallos in blue ink.

Ben Kallos, Chair
Governmental Operations Committee

cc: Mayor Bill de Blasio
New York City Board of Elections
Voter Assistance Advisory Committee



Citywide Senior Year Voter Registration Pilot

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The New York City Board of Elections (BOE) has agreed to make up to 73,790 pre-stamped voter registration cards available and deliver them to all public high schools with registration tracking codes by borough. This would provide 14,034 to the Bronx, 21,616 to Brooklyn, 15,432 to Manhattan, 18,607 to Queens, and 4,101 to Staten Island. High school principals would distribute voter registration forms to teachers on the same day citywide, “Senior Year Voter Registration Day.” During the advisory period, commonly referred to as “home room,” teachers would explain the importance of voter registration, circulate voter registration forms to all students in the class, then collect completed voter registration forms at the end of the period for return to the principal who would in turn cause them to be mailed. Board of Elections would then count the registrations and release a report of high school senior registrations by borough.

The proposed timeline is as follows:

May 26 – May 30: BOE mails voter registration cards to all public high schools;

May 31 – June 6: United State Postal Service delivery of voter registrations;

Coordinated campaign raising awareness for registration day through union communications to members as well as print, radio, television and social media;

June 10, “Senior Year Voter Registration Day”: Principals distribute voter registration cards to teachers for distribution, completion, and return during advisory period or homeroom;

Teachers are encouraged to educate students on importance of voter registration;

June 10 – June 11: Principals collect voter registration forms from teachers and deposit pre-stamped registration forms into the mail to BOE;

June 11 – June 16: United State Postal Service collection and delivery of voter registrations;

June 16 – June 20: BOE enter voter registrations and releases results by borough;

June 26: Voter registration cards are made available and distributed with diplomas to remaining unregistered public high school students;



New York City Administrative Code § 3-209
Young Adult Voter Registration Act

a. Short title. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Young Adult Voter Registration Act."

b. Registration of voters. Each public or private high school within the city shall make available during the school year to seniors such materials as may be published by the board of elections relating to voter registration and, where appropriate, shall provide applications for registration and enrollment, and may assist in the execution of such applications.

c. Registration of graduating seniors. The department of education of the city of New York shall provide a postage paid board of elections of the city of New York voter registration form to each graduating student who receives a high school diploma, including but not limited to a Regents, local, general equivalency or Individualized Education Program diploma. The department shall deliver such voter registration form to each graduating student at the same time and in the same manner as it delivers diplomas to each such student.

d. Forms to be available at school. The department of education of the city of New York shall ensure that postage paid board of elections voter registration forms are available in the main or central office of each high school under the jurisdiction of the department for students who wish to obtain one. The department shall also ensure that each such high school provides adequate notice to its students of the availability of such forms in its main or central office.

e. Sufficient quantity of forms. The department shall request from the board of elections of the city of New York a sufficient quantity of voter registration forms to meet the requirements of this subdivision.