



**Youth Organizers for Voting Outreach, Teaching & Engagement**  
*(a project of Fix Democracy First Education Fund)*

## **Project Overview**

### ***What is the problem?* – Low Voter Turnout & Lack of Civic Engagement**

Research repeatedly shows that voter turnout and civic participation in general in the United States has been on the decline for many years. The elimination of civic education in schools, barriers to voting, the increase of money in elections, and the overall lack of fair and equitable representation across the county, has led to apathy and a general lack of enthusiasm for our current system.

### ***What is the recommended solution?* – Start Civic Involvement Early**

Fortunately, there is a lot we can do to reverse this trend. A recent report from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century*, outlines many actions we can take to correct this course and help create a truly equitable system where all voices are heard been historically underrepresented.

### **What is YO VOTE!?**

**YO VOTE!** stands for Youth Organizers for Voter Outreach, Teaching & Engagement. When looking at possible ways to engage young people, we decided to focus attention on middle-school, high-school and college age youth. To enlist as voting and democracy organizers or ambassadors to help with voter registration, election information, getting out the vote, and providing resources to family, friends, neighbors, and other community members encourages voting and civic participation.

### **Why YO VOTE!**

Starting early civic participation and education can be one essential solution that can help grow voters and lifelong engaged civic participants. We need to engage our youth as early as possible. We shouldn't wait until our youth are in high school or college to invite them into the system. Young people are very interested in what's happening around them and want to be involved. We can provide young people of all ages the opportunity to participate. If we do, they are far more likely to stay engaged throughout their lives. Now, more than ever, it is the time for youth, the future leaders and voters of this country, to get involved.

## **Mission**

**YO VOTE!** is dedicated to empowering youth to become civically involved in their local communities. Build leadership skills, and grow into lifelong voters and civic participants committed to expanding inclusiveness, equity, justice, and fairness in democracy and increasing knowledge and awareness of local, state, and national issues.

## **Goals**

**YO VOTE!** will enlist youth, focusing on middle-school, high-school and college students, through a variety of outreach channels, including schools, teachers, parents, community groups, social media, etc. We will provide up-to-date information, training, mentoring, and resources to youth to help them become voting and democracy organizers and lifelong voters and civic leaders in their communities. We will utilize adult volunteers and parents for mentoring, resources, support, and guidance.

## **Values**

**YO VOTE!** is committed to creating a system of inclusiveness, social justice, and racial equity by expanding civic knowledge and awareness in local communities through empowering youth and growing lifelong voters and civic participants.

## **Next Steps**

We are currently in the early stages of the project and building infrastructure for the project to start our outreach, enlist volunteers and begin engagement with middle-school, high school and college age youth and their parents. We are actively fundraising to build this infrastructure, including a new website, volunteer engagement tools, and **YO VOTE!** promotional items and materials.

We will also eventually need additional staffing and plan to hire a full-time project manager to oversee the project and help organize and support our volunteers.

## **Support YO VOTE!**

We need to grow voters and build lifelong civic participants, please make a contribution to help launch this project and sign up to become a YO VOTE! Volunteer. We can't do this without you!

You can submit your donations to the address below made out to **FDFEF** or donate online at: **[yo-vote.org/donate](https://yo-vote.org/donate)**

**YO VOTE!** is a project of Fix Democracy First Education Fund, a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

For further questions, please contact Cindy Black, Executive Director at 206-552-3287 or email: [cindy@fixdemocracyfirst.org](mailto:cindy@fixdemocracyfirst.org).