

RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ABOUT THE MID-TERM ELECTIONS

by Social Education Staff

Traditionally, during mid-term elections the opposition party makes significant gains. This election, many analysts predict that Republicans will take control of the House and will also make significant gains in the Senate. Yet while 334 House seats and 81 Senate seats are considered either solidly Republican or Democrat, 101 House seats are currently considered to be in play, and 19 Senate seats are in play. The following resources will help readers track the election races, issues, and analysis, and offer ways to stimulate student interest and involvement.

Turnout

Kids Voting USA (www.kidsvotingusa.org) promotes opportunities for students to take part in a simulated voting experience that includes contemporary candidates and issues. The site offers teaching materials that help teachers meet state and national curriculum standards for social studies.

National Student/Parent Mock Election (www.nationalmockelection.org) is a voter-education project that allows students to cast their ballots in a Mock Election. More than five million young people (K-college) and parents cast their votes in 2008.

Rock the Vote (www.rockthevote.com) seeks to engage young people in the political process and increase youth turnout. The site provides an online registration tool and information on how, when, and where to vote.

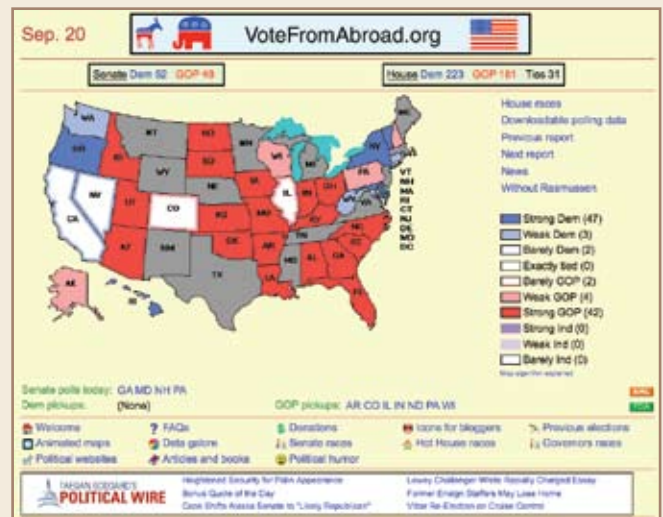
Similarly, Declare Yourself (www.declareyourself.com) works to get all young people to register and vote in local and national elections, provides an online registration tool, and Voting Frequently Asked Questions.

The Campaigns

The Federal Election Commission (www.fec.gov) posts information on the financing of each candidate's election.

Project Vote Smart (www.votesmart.org) is a non-partisan organization that compiles information on candidates' voting records, issue positions, ratings by conservative and liberal special interest groups, and much more.

The non-partisan Center for Responsive Politics runs www.opensecrets.org, a website that tracks financial contributions to politicians and their effects on elections and policy.



Predictions

PollingReport.com is a nonpartisan group that looks at trends in American public opinion and publishes surveys by different polling organizations.

Sabato's Crystal Ball (www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball), run by the University of Virginia's Center for Politics Director Larry J. Sabato, provides election analysis and predictions.

Rasmussen Reports (www.rasmussenreports.com) is an electronic media company that collects and publishes polling information.

The New York Times election site (www.nytimes.com/pages/politics) tracks House, Senate, and gubernatorial races, highlighting safe seats and toss ups.

Five Thirty Eight is the political blog hosted by *The New York Times* and run by statistician and analyst Nate Silver (<http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com>), who uses specific prediction models to provide election forecasts.

The Washington Post also tracks congressional and gubernatorial races at www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/politics/2010-race-maps/house/

Electoral Vote Predictor (www.electoral-vote.com) tracks House and Senate races and includes maps and state-by-state polls for federal elections.

The Cook Political Report at www.cookpolitical.com (which is mentioned in our Surfing the Net column this month) provides analysis and detailed projections for the mid-term elections.