



# Voter Turnout Among People Aged 18 to 24 In Palo Alto

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**Key Question:** Why are people aged 18 to 24 less likely than other age groups to vote in local elections?

### Introduction

“in every U.S. presidential election from 1964 on, 18- to 24-year-olds voted at lower rates than all other age groups” (Census Bureau, 2014)

**Significance**

- Every vote counts: Elections determine direction of country
- Representative Democracy: Government must be informed of what citizens want
- Habit-forming: Voting at young age -> Voting at older age

- ### Research Methodologies
1. Randomly select 15 Palo Alto High 12th graders
  2. Interview students that were willing
  3. Reach out to Living Skills and Social Studies teachers at Palo Alto High
  4. Interview teachers that were willing
  5. Edit lesson plan to incorporate priorities of students and teachers
  6. Deliver pre-survey to 11th graders in U.S. History
  7. Show “the Power of the Youth Vote” TEDtalk
  8. Deliver post-survey to same students
  9. Guide students through pre-registration process on RocktheVote.org

“We do not have a government by the majority. We have a government by the majority who vote.”  
-- Thomas Jefferson

### Data and Findings

#### Before lesson

Are you currently pre-registered to vote?  
37 responses

Figure 1 (above): Before the lesson 70.3% of respondents were not pre-registered to vote compared to 5.4% of respondents who were.

#### After lesson

Do you plan to pre-register or register to vote when you're able?  
35 responses

Figure 2 (above): After the lesson 81.4% of respondents planned to pre-registered to vote compared to 2.9% of respondents who did not.

#### Before lesson

How likely are you to vote in the first local election that you are eligible?  
37 responses

Figure 3 (above): Breakdown of respondents before the lesson based on how likely they were to vote in the first local election they are eligible.

#### After lesson

How likely are you to vote in the first local election that you are eligible?  
35 responses

Figure 4 (above): Breakdown of respondents after the lesson based on how likely they were to vote in the first local election they are eligible.



- ### Conclusions and Analysis
- Lesson increased voter pre-registration
  - More students pre-registering → more students voting
  - Lesson increased future participation in local elections
  - Lesson generally increased students' likelihood to vote

- ### Implications and Next Steps
- More engagement with voting → more voter participation
  - Broader sample size → more representative results
  - Student leading lesson → possibly more engaged students
  - Providing class time to register → possibly increases registration
  - Fun, interesting, lesson → increased student engagement
  - More variables researched → most effective lesson

### Acknowledgements/References

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\*\*\*Works Cited:  
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