

KANSAS HIGH SCHOOL

VOTER REGISTRATION REPORT



THE BOTTOM LINE

Nationally, **less than 30% of 18-year-olds are registered to vote**, compared to 75% of voters 45 and older. That's not because young people don't care—it's because we haven't built the systems to reach them where they are.

In Kansas, high school voter registration rates swing wildly from year to year and county to county. Some districts consistently register their students at high rates (if you're one of them, we want to hear from you!). Others struggle to break single digits. Almost every district saw higher voter registration in 2024 compared to 2023. What's driving these differences? That's what this report digs into.

The data shows we have significant room to improve—and real opportunities to learn from our own bright spots.

In Kansas, students can register to vote before turning 18, making the school year an ideal time to establish voting as a habit. And because elections happen every single year in Kansas, building consistent systems to register new voters isn't just helpful—it's essential to strengthening democratic participation.

YOUNG VOTERS ARE SHOWING UP

The potential is real. Researchers at CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement) identified Kansas as one of the key states showing growth in youth voter registration, with a 29% increase in youth voter registration between 2018 and 2022.

When young people show up at the polls, they bring fresh perspectives on education, economic opportunity, climate, and technology – the issues that will define their futures.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

This is where you come in. Whether you're a student leader, educator, school administrator, or community partner, The Voter Network is here to support your efforts with practical tools and training. **We've got links below and more information at our website: www.thevoternetwork.org**

VOTER REG WORKSHOP ON MARCH 11!

Join us from 6-7pm on March 11, 2026 for a virtual training on how to organize a high school voter registration drive.



EMAIL OUR TEAM

Can't make the training? Email our team and we will get resources your way, just the same.



ONGOING SUPPORT

Visit our website to stay in the loop as we continue to roll out resources, guidance, and networking opportunities



DATA DASHBOARD

We've created a data dashboard that provides detailed voter registration data across districts, counties in Kansas.



ABOUT THE VOTER NETWORK

The Voter Network is a nonpartisan civic engagement organization working to expand voter participation across Kansas through relational organizing—the simple but powerful idea that people are most influenced by those they know and trust.

We've partnered with community organizations and volunteers to build sustainable systems for participation across all election cycles. But we realize that if we want to create lasting change, we have to start early. The habits and systems we build with young people are the foundation of Kansas's civic future.

WHY IT MATTERS

Research consistently shows that **voting is habit-forming**. Students who register while still in high school show higher participation rates over their lifetimes compared to those who wait until their early twenties.

That's why reaching students before they graduate isn't just about one election—it's about setting them up for a lifetime of civic participation.



Democracy works best when everyone participates. Let's make sure every eligible Kansas high school student has the chance to be heard.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report analyzes Kansas high school voter registration data to understand participation rates, identify gaps, and spotlight opportunities for increased youth civic engagement.

DATA SOURCES & CALCULATIONS

1. Identified the number of 2023 and 2024 high school graduates using data from the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE).
2. Pulled data for people registered to vote in Kansas in the 2023 and 2024 elections from the Kansas Secretary of State's Office. The voter file will include the districts to which the registrant is assigned, i.e. county, congressional district, state senate, state house, and, of course, school district.
3. Filtered the data for people in the 2023 and 2024 graduating cohorts (born between Sept 1 – Aug 31st 18 years beforehand)
4. Counted registered graduates per district; divided by total graduates for a registration rate.

UNDERSTANDING THE LIMITATIONS

This methodology largely excludes homeschooled graduates, though that omission is unlikely to materially impact the overall findings. Private and parochial schools present a different challenge: because they lack defined geographic boundaries, their graduates are distributed among surrounding public school districts, which means registration rates may appear modestly higher than they are. In a small number of cases where registrations exceeded the graduate count, rates were capped at 100%. Additionally, districts with higher concentrations of non-citizen students may show lower registration rates because these students are ineligible to register. **For all of these reasons, the data should be read directionally rather than as precise measurements.**

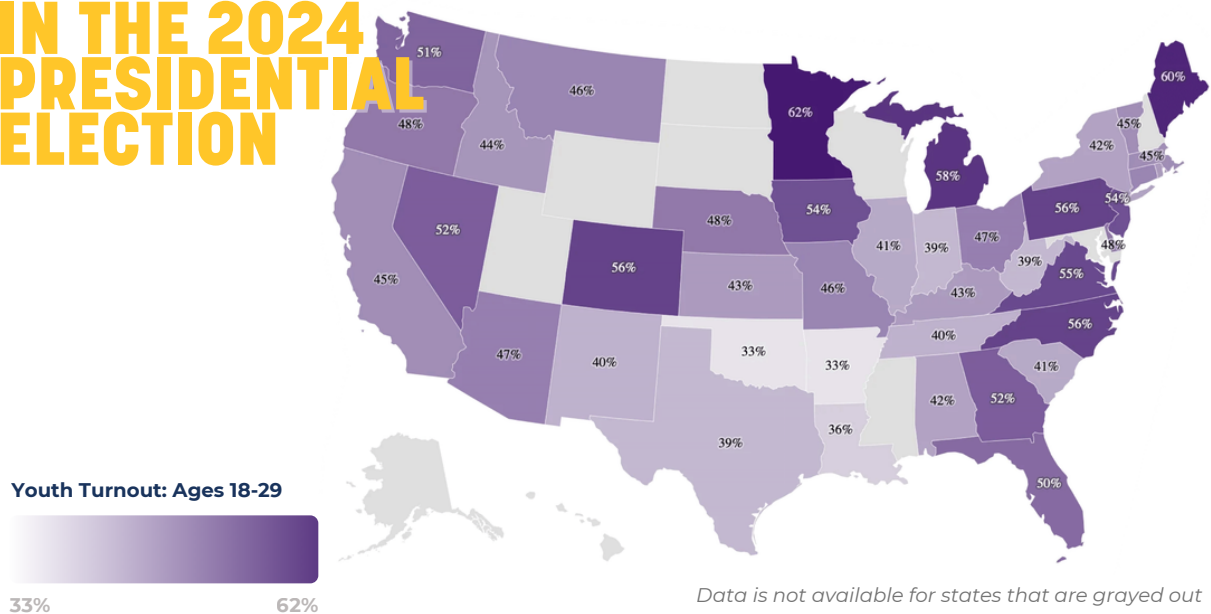


QUESTIONS?

For more information about the data or methodology used in this report, [contact The Voter Network](#). We're happy to discuss.

YOUTH VOTER TURNOUT BY STATE IN THE 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Source: Tufts University College - CIRCLE



The data tells us something important: young people care. They're engaged. And when given the opportunity and support to register, they participate. But participation shouldn't spike only during presidential election years—it should be consistent across every election cycle.

THE POWER OF PEER-TO-PEER OUTREACH

At The Voter Network, we believe the most effective engagement happens through trusted relationships. When a friend texts you about voting, you read it. When a teacher you respect encourages civic participation, you pay attention. When a classmate reminds you to register, you listen.

This isn't just theory—it's what the research shows. Voters are most influenced by people they know and trust, which makes student-led registration programs uniquely powerful.

For educators, this is an opportunity to empower students to lead meaningful civic engagement in your school. For students, this is your chance to make sure your voice—and your classmates' voices—are heard.

THE KANSAS DATA

WHAT WE FOUND

Let's start with the headline: across Kansas, 29% of high school students were registered to vote in 2023, compared to 55% in 2024. That's nearly a doubling of registration rates in just one year.

**SUBSTANTIALLY MORE
HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATES REGISTERED
TO VOTE IN 2024**

Source: Graduation data from Kansas State
Department of Education and voter registration
data from Kansas Secretary of State

29%

2023

55%

2024

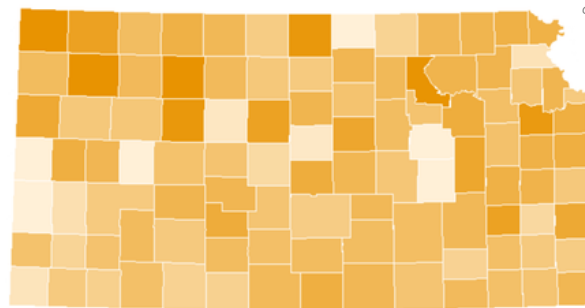
Despite comparable numbers of graduates, voter registrations in 2023 were about half of those in 2024. **The most straightforward explanation is that presidential election years generate dramatically more attention**—from campaigns, media coverage, and civic organizations—than local election years, when Kansas turnout typically hovers around 20%.

But here's what we don't yet know: What specific factors drove that increase? Was it organized school-based efforts? Social media campaigns? Individual teachers taking initiative? Increased media attention making registration feel more urgent? Understanding the mechanisms behind this jump is critical, because it could help us replicate that success in non-presidential years. That's a question we're investigating, and we'd welcome partnerships with schools and districts willing to track and share what works in their communities.

COUNTY-BY-COUNTY

WHERE ARE THE GAPS?

THE PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES REGISTERED TO VOTE IN 2024 VARIED SIGNIFICANTLY BETWEEN COUNTIES.



Source: Graduation data from Kansas State Department of Education and voter registration data from Kansas Secretary of State

% REGISTERED

9%

100%

When we break down the data by county, registration rates vary significantly — from single digits to more than 90%. So, what explains the variation? We have working theories:

1.

SCHOOL SIZE AND CAPACITY

Larger districts may have more staff capacity and resources to implement organized registration efforts, while smaller schools might benefit from closer relationships between students and staff.

2.

PROXIMITY TO ORGANIZED OUTREACH

Presidential campaigns and civic organizations don't distribute their attention evenly across Kansas, which likely creates geographic disparities in registration opportunities.

3.

COMMUNITY CIVIC CULTURE

Counties with strong traditions of civic engagement may create environments where youth registration happens naturally. Sometimes a single motivated teacher or student can determine whether registration happens systematically or not at all.

These remain hypotheses. We're eager to learn from districts with consistently high registration rates about what's working in their communities. **If this is you, email us at contact@thevoternetwork.org.**

WHAT COMES NEXT?

So, what does this all mean? The data tells us that young people will register to vote when we meet them where they are. And the best way to do that is through peer-to-peer, student-led efforts supported by engaged educators and community partners.



HOW THE VOTER NETWORK CAN HELP

We're not asking you to figure this out alone. The Voter Network has resources and training to support school-based voter registration efforts across Kansas

For this project, The Voter Network is partnering with The Civics Center, a national nonprofit that helps high school students register to vote by training educators and student leaders.

MARCH 11, 2026 TRAINING >>>



In partnership with The Civics Center, The Voter Network is hosting a training on March 11, 2026 specifically designed for student leaders. This training will equip you with the skills and confidence to lead voter registration efforts in your school.

EXPLORE & COMPARE YOUR DATA >>>



How's your district doing at registering high school students to vote? How's your county doing? Learn more and compare with others, using our dashboard at www.thevoternetwork.org.

Students who complete a voter reg drive this spring may be eligible for a financial stipend! Sign up for our March 11, virtual training to learn more: bit.ly/hsvoter

WHAT THIS COULD LOOK LIKE IN YOUR SCHOOL

Voter registration drives can happen anywhere students already gather. Here are just a few ways schools across Kansas could approach this work:



History, government, and civics teachers can integrate voter registration into their curriculum, making it part of lessons on democracy and civic participation.



Student councils and class officers can organize registration drives during lunch, at assemblies, or before school events.



Journalism teachers and student newspaper staff can cover local elections, promote registration deadlines, and highlight the importance of youth voter participation.



Principals and school administrators can champion voter registration as part of the school's commitment to civic education and create space for these efforts.



County election boards can partner with schools to provide accurate information, resources, and support for registration efforts.

The key is personal outreach.
Whether you're a student talking to friends or a teacher talking about civic participation, remember: the messenger matters just as much as the message.





LET'S BUILD THIS TOGETHER.

**INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE OR GETTING INVOLVED?
REACH OUT TO US AT THE VOTER NETWORK.**

CONTACT@THEVOTERNETWORK.ORG

APPENDIX

FOCUS ON KANSAS'S LARGEST COUNTIES

To better understand the registration landscape in Kansas's most populous areas, we examined the 5 largest counties based on the number of high school graduates in 2024: Johnson, Sedgwick, Wyandotte, Shawnee, and Douglas Counties.

These five counties represent a significant portion of Kansas's high school population. Understanding the school district breakdown within each county can help educators and student leaders identify opportunities for targeted voter registration efforts.

By examining registration rates at the school district level, schools can benchmark their performance, learn from successful districts, and develop strategies tailored to their communities. The full dataset is available at www.thevoternetwork.org.

JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS



PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REGISTERED

	2023	2024
Blue Valley	43%	86%
De Soto	45%	83%
Gardner Edgerton	36%	69%
Olathe	45%	70%
Shawnee Mission	58%	88%
Spring Hill	18%	40%

SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS

PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REGISTERED

	2023	2024
Cheney	21%	61%
Clearwater	29%	59%
Derby	26%	48%
Goddard	38%	69%
Haysville	24%	36%
Maize	44%	68%
Mulvane	20%	40%
Renwick	29%	70%
Valley Center	51%	66%
Wichita	53%	64%

WYANDOTTE COUNTY, KANSAS



PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REGISTERED

	2023	2024
Bonner Springs	43%	61%
Kansas City	38%	53%
Piper	48%	89%
Turner	42%	56%

SHAWNEE COUNTY, KANSAS



PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REGISTERED

	2023	2024
Auburn Washburn	59%	86%
Seaman	72%	87%
Shawnee Heights	53%	74%
Silver Lake	72%	85%
Topeka	63%	75%

DOUGLAS COUNTY, KANSAS



PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REGISTERED

	2023	2024
Baldwin City	50%	91%
Eudora	60%	49%
Lawrence	65%	100%