



# Secretary of State

*Tim Wyman*

## **Voting Opportunities through Education Act (ESB 6313) Advisory #2**

Student Engagement Hubs

July 27, 2020

ESB 6313 requires several counties to provide Student Engagement Hubs on college campuses.

Each state university, regional university, and The Evergreen State College, as defined in RCW 28B.10.016 must provide both voter registration services and ballots via the Public Voter Portal to Washington citizens. Higher education campuses as defined in RCW 28B.45.012 (branch campuses) only need to provide ballots via the Public Voter Portal. In 2020, the following fall into these categories:

- Benton County – WSU Tri Cities\*
- Clark County – WSU Vancouver\*
- King County – University of Washington
- King County – UW Bothell\*
- Kittitas County – Central Washington University
- Pierce County - UW Tacoma\*
- Spokane County – Eastern Washington University
- Thurston County – The Evergreen State College
- Whatcom County – Western Washington University
- Whitman County – Washington State University

\*Voter registration services not required

Student Hubs may be open county business hours starting up to eight days before an election through 8:00 p.m. on Election Day or until all voters in line at 8:00 p.m. have voted and deposited their ballots. Hubs are only required to be open during November general elections.

All Hubs must allow Washington voters to download their exact ballot (correct precinct and split) from an online portal. Ballot drop box procedures outlined in RCW and WAC for emptying the contents and closing the box at 8:00 p.m. Election Day must be followed.

Institutions outlined in RCW 28B.10.016 must also provide in-person voter registration and registration materials to any Washington citizen. In 2020, institutions required to offer voter registration services are the University of Washington, Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, The Evergreen State College, Western Washington University, and Washington State University.

A list of all Student Engagement Hubs must appear in the printed State Voters' Pamphlet and the printed Local Voters' Pamphlet produced by the applicable counties.<sup>1</sup>

Institutions must contract with the county for Student Engagement Hub operation. For all Hubs, the contract must include:

- A method for voters to download and print the voter's exact ballot from an online portal.
- Provisions for protecting the privacy and secrecy of any voted ballot.
- Instructions and envelopes for voters to return a ballot. This may include providing stamps to voters to mail in their ballot.
- A secured ballot drop box at the Hub as well as who/when the ballot drop box is emptied and closed at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- Procedures for allowing voters in line at the Hub at 8:00 p.m. to obtain a ballot, vote, and deposit ballots.
- Operation of the Hub in a non-partisan manner. Campaign materials or campaigning are prohibited within 25 feet of the entrances and exits of the Hub facility, or within the Hub.
- Provision of accessible facilities compliant with the ADA.

For Hubs that require voter registration services, the contract must also include:

- An agreed upon method of providing voter registration services for all eligible citizens.
- Setting the hours of operation as the County Auditor's normal working hours and, on Election Day until 8:00 p.m. or until all voters in line at 8:00 have voted and deposited ballots.
- Listing the days the Hub will be in operation up to the maximum of eight days prior to the election.
- Outlining who will provide at least the following:
  - Staffing
  - Provisional ballots
  - Notice of the availability of services
  - Appropriate voter information, including voter pamphlets

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<sup>1</sup> Per ESB 2421, all counties are required to produce a local voters' pamphlet for every election effective July 1, 2021

- Procedures for allowing voters in line at 8:00 p.m. to register to vote, obtain a ballot, vote, and deposit ballots

Grant funding was provided by the State Legislature for the operation of Student Engagement Hubs in 2020. Counties may apply to the Secretary of State for Hub operation grant funding.

For procedures related to voter registration and issuing ballots for out-of-county voters, see the “Voting Opportunities through Education Act Advisory #1 – Universal Registration”.