

Creating a pathway to expand student voting rights in local board elections

Expanding Youth Engagement in our Republic

Stronger communities. Stronger schools. Stronger citizens.



What the Measure Would Do

- This nonpartisan measure would allow local school districts and school boards to adopt an ordinance to grant allowance for students aged 16 and 17 to vote for their representative school district board members.
- If a local school board allows for students aged 16/17 to vote within their district board of education races, then those **students would be able to cast a ballot or vote in person only for their local school board races.**
- The cost implications of this measure are minimal, as the processes necessary to register 16- and 17-year-olds and keep separate voter rolls (for groups permitted to vote on one part of a ballot but not another) already exist.



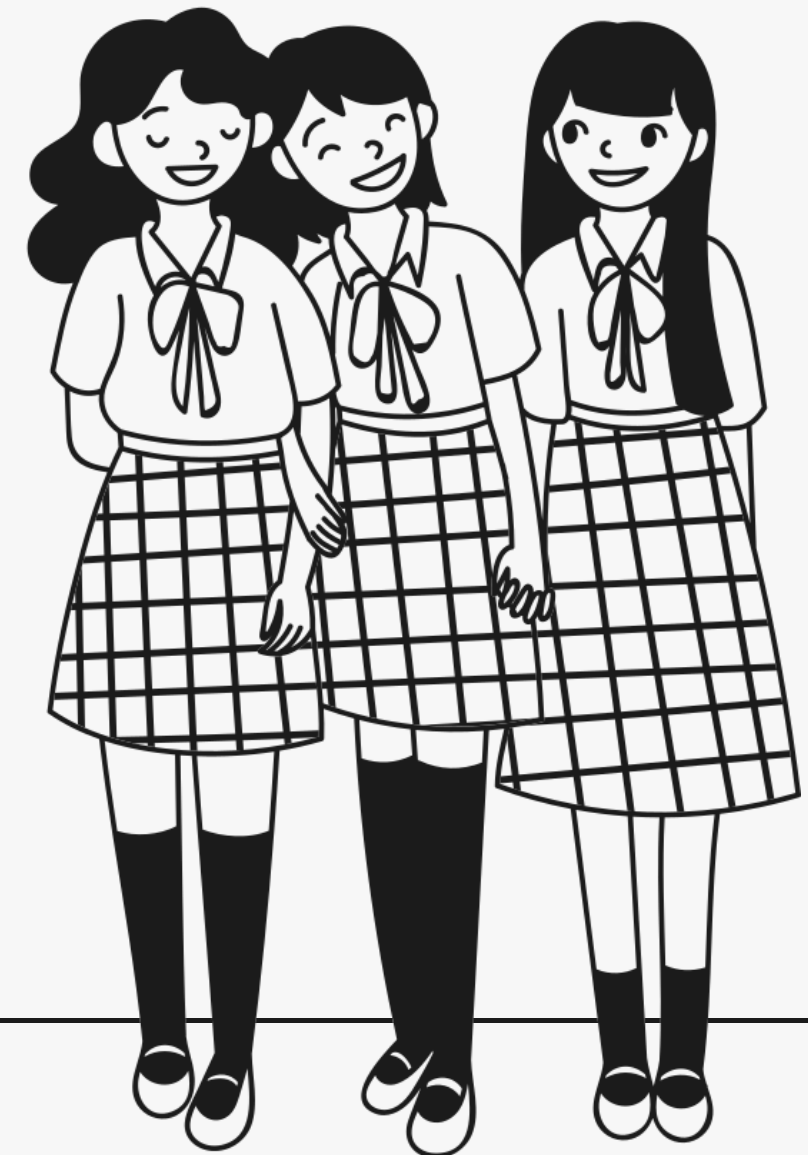
What the Measure Wouldn't Do



- This legislation will not be a blanket approval that forces all school boards to allow students to participate in board member elections
- This is a proposal to create a pathway for students aged 16/17 to vote in their local school board elections, **granting absolute flexibility.**
- Rather, this legislation will allow for local school boards to choose whether or not students in their districts will have the right to vote in their local board elections.
- This gives local and individual districts **respect** and right to **autonomy** and teaches students about the right of choice in **localized decision making.**

Why School Boards?

- Voter apathy and disengagement are still leading factors of why young people fail to fill ballots or fail to register
- For teenagers, local school boards provide the greatest impact on young lives, more direct than perhaps any federal institution.
- Exercising the right to vote is critical at every level of our democracy; there is no clearer example of impact than local school boards.
- By encouraging students to vote in local school board elections, we will be raising a generation of informed voters, students are more in tune with their educational needs than anybody else.
- Students will also be able to see firsthand the impact of local votes, and will continue to vote in local elections throughout their lifetimes



Why 16/17?



- **At 16/17, you can...**
- Work a full-time job
- Pay taxes
- Own a business
- Work on a campaign
- Drive without supervision
- Hold a private pilot's license
- Get a tattoo
- Register to vote
- Join the armed forces
- Most importantly, at 16, students are subjected under the rule of their local school boards who govern their educations from ages 5-18.
- In Utah, only 14% of students aged 16/17 are pre-registered to vote.
- Currently, students are **only allowed to vote for their school board representatives *once* they have *aged out* of the schooling system:** having a say in the future education of other students, but not in their own.

Facts and Figures

- Utah has one of the lowest youth voter turnout rates – in 2018, the turnout was 16% - ranking as one of the bottom 3 states in the nation.
- When voting and the importance of voting are taught in conjunction in high school, students are 40% more likely to vote and to continue to vote throughout their lifetimes.
- In the 2020 elections, an estimated 30% of voters failed to complete their full ballots.
- In Utah, 30% of our population is below 18.



Utah Student Body Presidents

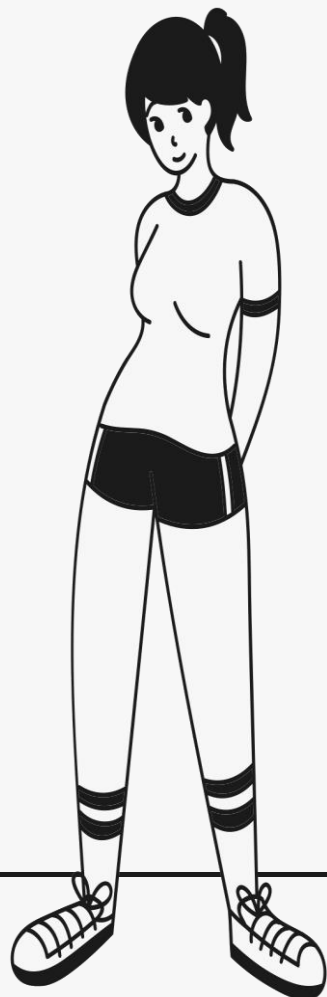
<u>Parker Poque</u> (Corner Canyon)	<u>Brooklyn Wagner</u> (Jordan)	<u>Dallin Carter</u> (Riverton)	<u>Heber Clawson</u> (Box Elder)	<u>Moody Jacob</u> (Snow Canyon)	<u>Kambree Adams</u> (Bear River)
<u>River Goring</u> (Logan)	<u>Chase Fisher</u> (Desert Hills)	<u>Ravi Kaur</u> (Murray)	<u>Evan Harrell</u> (Cedar)	<u>Nate Bigham</u> (Syracuse)	<u>Mya Bateman</u> (East)
<u>Nathalie Ramirez</u> (West)	<u>Sarah Millett</u> (Timpanogos)	<u>Carter West</u> (Pine View)	<u>Sydnee Jensen</u> (Granstville)	<u>Faith Godina</u> (Cottonwood)	<u>Matt Terry</u> (Fremont)
<u>Tyler Garner</u> (Weber)	<u>Cooper Strople</u> (Park City)	<u>Hannah Stephenson</u> (Preston)	<u>Cooper Pugmire</u> (Farmington)	<u>Yenah Park</u> (Herriman)	<u>Josh Raff</u> <u>Alexis Brown</u>
<u>Dylan Despain</u> (Morgan)	<u>Rachel Wasden</u> (Maple Mountain)	<u>Tyler Cox</u> (Taylorsville)	<u>Luke Wilson</u> (Toole)	<u>Megan Parson</u> (Ridgeline)	<u>Brock Esplin</u> (Crimson Cliffs)
<u>Aliyah Beringer</u> (Roy)	<u>Chloe Caldwell</u> (Ogden)	<u>Luke Hepworth</u> (Viewmont)	<u>Shelby Green</u> (Cyprus)	<u>Gardner Fulao</u> (Highland)	<u>Taylor Wilkinson</u> (Lone Peak)
<u>Kaden Hart</u> (Westlake)	<u>Blue Johnson</u> (West Jordan)	<u>Alex Lopez</u> (Granger)	<u>Tyler Fredrick</u> (Olympus)	<u>Hayden Kerr</u> (Dixie)	<u>Marcus Bender</u> (Uintah)
<u>Hawk Ballstaedt</u> (Wasatch)	<u>Ryder Wilcox</u> (Ben Lomond)	<u>Alex Kohler</u> (Provo)	<u>Jacob Harrison</u> (Timpview)	<u>Connor Hobbs</u> (Clearfield)	<u>Nathan Saez</u> (Juab)
<u>Faria Moises</u> (Kearns)	<u>Sadie Gilberg</u> (Hurricane)	<u>Carter West</u> (Pineview)	<u>Dallen Jeppson</u> (Alta)	<u>Ty Johnson</u> (Carbon)	<u>Julia Black</u> (Orem)
<u>Gavin Ballard</u> (Bingham)	<u>Sam Turner</u> (Summit)	<u>Tanner Woodruff</u> (Bountiful)	<u>Elle Barker</u> (Skyline)	<u>Josh Christiansen</u> (Bingham)	<u>Cisca</u> (San Juan)
<u>Emily Dent</u> (Davis)	<u>Brayden Adamson</u> (Salem Hills)	<u>Luke Olson</u> (Green Canyon)	<u>Luke Steadman</u> (Skyridge)	<u>Remington Ohmdahl</u> (Pleasant Grove)	<u>Will Rahaniotis</u> (Brighton)
<u>Brigham Pugsley</u> (Woods Cross)	<u>Halli Hales</u> (Union)	<u>Shayla Nham</u> (Copper Hills)	<u>Sarah Lingwall</u> (Mountain Ridge)	<u>Max Lepore</u> (Hillcrest)	<u>Connor Nygard</u> (Real Salt Lake)
<u>Liv Harding</u> (Hunter)	<u>Hannah Jo Oesor</u> (Real Salt Lake)	<u>Myles Hancock</u> (Mountain Crest)	<u>Spencer Bretey</u> (Lehi)	<u>Brayden Hunt</u> (Cedar Valley)	<u>Katie Bell</u> (Mountain View)

“ We, the Student Body Presidents of Utah, wholeheartedly endorse House Bill 338. We believe that HB338 will help students have an active say in who represents their education, would boost youth voter turnout, highlight the importance of local elections, and raise a generation of informed voters.”

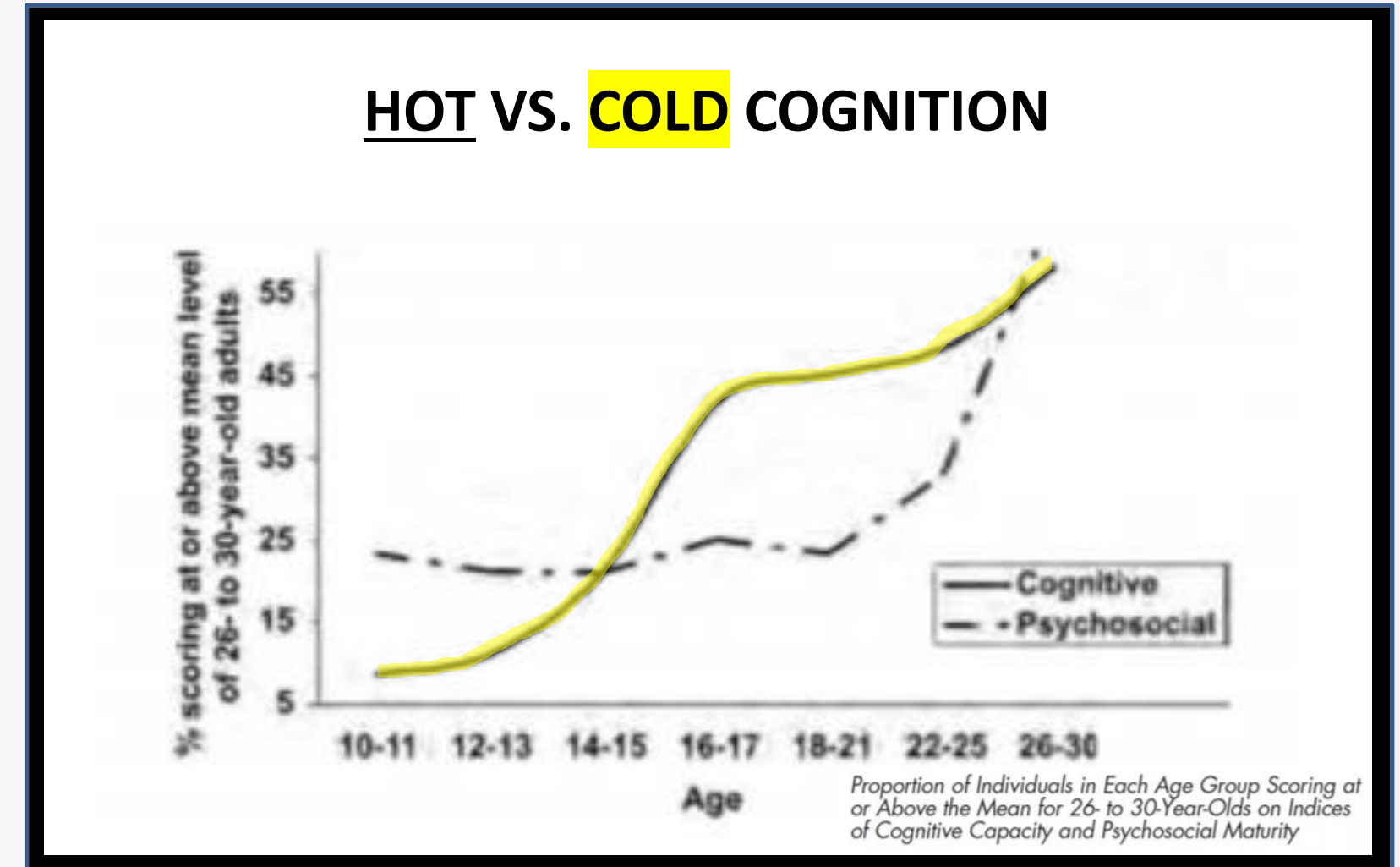
“Utah, lets show the rest of the world how its done.”



Student Support



- “Aren't teen brains too underdeveloped for them to vote?”
 - Filling a ballot is a cold cognitive decision
- “Won't students just become political pawns for teachers' unions or education reformers?”
- “They're just kids. Don't 16- and 17-year-olds have lower maturity and interest / knowledge than adults?”
- “Isn't it unfair for students to vote on property taxes when they don't pay them?”
 - *Harper v. Virginia & Stewart v. Parrish*
- “Can this be a bipartisan measure?”
 - Local school board races are nonpartisan.



THANK YOU!

Stronger communities. Stronger schools. Stronger citizens.

