MVPCS MOCK GOVERNOR ELECTION

Grades 1–2 History & Social Science Unit

October 1 – November 3, 2026

LEARN

leaders • governor • democracy • voting

CAMPAIGN

posters • flyers • speeches • voter guides

VOTE

schoolwide mock election • tally • reflect

The classroom candidates are fictional and not connected to any real party or candidate.

Pillar connection: DEMOCRACY — listen, learn, make a fair choice, vote, accept the result, and keep working together.

Our Election Unit Timeline

Five weeks of civics learning, campaign education, and a schoolwide mock vote.

OCT. 1–2
Leaders & community

→

OCT. 5–9
The Massachusetts Governor

→

OCT. 12–16
Democracy, elections & voting

→

OCT. 19–23
Candidates, platforms & issues

→

OCT. 26–30
Create campaigns

→

NOV. 3
MOCK ELECTION DAY

Culminating event: Tuesday, November 3, 2026

This is also the date of the real Massachusetts state election in 2026.

Source: Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth — Upcoming Elections (2026).

What Will We Learn?

By Election Day, students should be able to explain these ideas in their own words.

1. LEADERSHIP

Describe qualities of a helpful leader and explain that leaders have responsibilities to a group.

2. GOVERNOR

Name the Governor of Massachusetts and explain several jobs of the Governor.

3. ELECTIONS

Explain election, vote, ballot, candidate, campaign, platform, and issue.

4. DEMOCRACY

Connect voting, respectful listening, fairness, and accepting results to the MVPCS Pillar of Democracy.

5. CIVIC ACTION

Use accurate facts to create posters, flyers, speeches, and a voter guide for a fictional campaign.

Aligned to MA HSS Grade 1 Topic 1 standards on leadership, voting, elections, and elected leaders; extended through Grade 2 civics/government.

Key Vocabulary: People & Government

LEADER

A person who helps a group organize, decide, and work toward a goal.

GOVERNMENT

The people and systems that make and carry out rules and laws.

GOVERNOR

The elected leader of a state's executive branch.

CITIZEN

A member of a country with rights and responsibilities.

Say it together:

"A governor is a leader in state government."

Turn & talk: How is a governor like a classroom leader? How is the job different?

Key Vocabulary: Democracy & Voting

DEMOCRACY

A system in which people have a voice in government, including by voting.

ELECTION

A kind of voting in which people select leaders.

VOTE

To make a choice in an election or a group decision.

BALLOT

The paper or screen used to record a vote.



Democracy is more than Election Day. It also includes listening, learning, and participating respectfully.

Key Vocabulary: Campaigns & Ideas

CANDIDATE

A person seeking to be chosen for an office.

CAMPAIGN

Organized work to help people learn about and support a candidate or idea.

PLATFORM

A candidate’s set of ideas and plans about important issues.

ISSUE

A topic or problem people care about and may disagree about.

PERSUADE

To give reasons that may convince someone.

FACT / OPINION

A fact can be checked; an opinion is a belief or judgment.

What Makes a Good Leader?

Massachusetts Grade 1 civics asks students to describe qualities of good leaders.



A leader is still a member of the group — but has extra responsibility to help the group succeed.

MA HSS Grade 1 standards HSS.1.T1.03–04.

Leadership Check: What Would You Say?

Hold up 👍 for helpful leadership or ✋ for “needs a better choice.”

MIA

Mia listens to everyone, then helps the group choose a plan.

Helpful leadership? Why?

NOAH

Noah says, “Only my idea matters.”

Helpful leadership? Why or why not?

LENA

Lena gives jobs to group members and thanks them for helping.

Helpful leadership? Why?

Sentence starter: “I think this shows / does not show good leadership because…”

What Is State Government?

Massachusetts state government has three branches.

LEGISLATIVE

Makes state laws.

Massachusetts Legislature = the General Court.

EXECUTIVE

Carries out state laws.

The Governor leads this branch.

JUDICIAL

Courts decide legal questions and interpret laws.

Our unit focuses on the Governor — but the Governor does not run all three branches.

Source: Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth — structure of state government.

What Does the Massachusetts Governor Do?

The Governor is the head of the executive branch of Massachusetts government.

CARRY OUT LAWS

Leads executive agencies that put state laws into action.

BUDGET

Prepares/proposes the annual state budget.

APPOINT

Appoints leaders of many state departments and agencies.

SIGN OR VETO

Accepts or vetoes bills passed by the Legislature.

EMERGENCIES

Helps coordinate the state response during emergencies.

REPRESENT THE STATE

Works with the federal government and others on behalf of Massachusetts.

Source: Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth, State Constitutional Officers / Governor responsibilities.

Can the Governor Do That?

A governor is powerful — but does not make every decision alone.

GOVERNOR HAS A ROLE

- Propose a state budget
- Sign or veto a state bill
- Appoint many department leaders
- Help coordinate a statewide emergency

LOCAL / SCHOOL DECISION

- Choose your classroom snack
- Set one class's recess schedule
- Pick your class read-aloud
- Make every town's daily schedule

NEEDS MANY PARTS OF GOVERNMENT

- Create a new law
- Large housing programs
- Major transportation projects
- State-local climate and coastal work

Big idea: A campaign promise is not the same thing as having the power to act alone.

Who Is the Governor of Massachusetts?

Current office-holder to teach by name — verify again immediately before the lesson.

MAURA HEALEY

Governor of Massachusetts

As of September 2026

The Governor’s office is in the Massachusetts State House in Boston.

Student check: “Who is the Governor?” → “Governor Maura Healey.”

Source: Mass.gov Governor’s Office and Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth.

The MVPCS Pillar: Democracy

Our mock election is practice in how a community can make fair choices together.

LISTEN

Hear different ideas.

LEARN

Use accurate facts.

CHOOSE

Think about what matters to you.

VOTE

Make one private choice.

RESPECT

Accept the result and keep working together.

Democracy does NOT mean everyone agrees. It means people have a voice and use fair processes to make shared decisions.

How Does an Election Work?

Put these steps in order.

1 **LEARN about candidates and issues**

2 THINK about the ideas

3 MARK one choice on the ballot

4 CAST the ballot

5 COUNT the ballots fairly

6 **ACCEPT the result and continue participating**

A secret ballot means your vote can stay private.

What Is a Campaign? What Is a Platform?

CAMPAIGN

The organized work people do to help voters learn about a candidate and the candidate's ideas.

Campaign tools: posters, flyers, speeches, questions, voter guides.

PLATFORM

The candidate's set of ideas and plans about important issues.

A fair campaign uses the official platform facts and does not invent promises.

Our goal is not to make everyone choose the same candidate. Our goal is to help voters understand both choices.

Issues Martha’s Vineyard Voters Might Care About

These are classroom topics for discussing what state leaders can influence.

COASTS & CLEAN WATER

beaches • dunes • ponds • storms

TRANSPORTATION

roads • crosswalks • buses • island connections

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

libraries • science • arts • recreation

YEAR-ROUND HOUSING

homes for families and year-round workers

ENERGY & PREPAREDNESS

energy saving • storms • outages

LOCAL JOBS

small businesses • workers • farms • fisheries

Teacher reminder: “Which level of government has a role?” is often as important as “Which idea do you like?”

Meet Fictional Candidate: Avery Shore

AVERY SHORE

“Listen. Protect. Connect.”

Avery Shore is a fictional Massachusetts community planner who grew up near the coast and likes solving problems by listening to many people before making a plan.

Avery’s four platform topics

- Coasts & clean water
- Safe transportation
- Schools & libraries
- Year-round housing

Fictional. Nonpartisan. Equal campaign time.

Avery Shore: Platform Details

COASTS & CLEAN WATER

Ask the state to invest more in beach, dune, pond, and coastal-restoration projects that help communities prepare for storms.

SAFE TRANSPORTATION

Prioritize state grants for safer roads, crosswalks, sidewalks, bike routes, and emergency transportation planning, including island communities.

SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES

Propose state budget support for school libraries, science materials, arts programs, and field-learning opportunities.

YEAR-ROUND HOUSING

Use state housing partnerships to support homes for teachers, nurses, firefighters, and other year-round workers in high-cost communities.

Meet Fictional Candidate: Jordan Fields

JORDAN FIELDS

“Strong Communities. Bright Futures.”

Jordan Fields is a fictional Massachusetts small-business owner and youth-sports volunteer who believes communities are strongest when families have useful services and safe places to live, learn, and play.

Jordan’s four platform topics

- Energy & preparedness
- Community transportation
- After-school & recreation
- Homes & local jobs

Fictional. Nonpartisan. Equal campaign time.

Jordan Fields: Platform Details

ENERGY & PREPAREDNESS

Expand state help for energy-saving improvements in homes, schools, and public buildings, and improve storm and power-outage preparedness.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION

Support state investments in safer roads, public transportation connections, and cleaner vehicles that help people travel around Massachusetts.

AFTER-SCHOOL & RECREATION

Propose state support for after-school learning, music, sports, parks, and safe community recreation programs.

HOMES & LOCAL JOBS

Help communities repair or reuse existing buildings for year-round housing and support programs for local jobs and small businesses.

Compare the Fictional Candidates

Compare ideas — not personalities. There is no “teacher choice.”

Issue	Avery Shore	Jordan Fields
Environment / preparedness	Coastal restoration, clean water, storm prep	Energy-saving improvements, storm/outage prep
Transportation	Roads, crosswalks, sidewalks, bike routes, emergency planning	Roads, public transportation connections, cleaner vehicles
Schools / youth	Libraries, science, arts, field learning	After-school learning, music, sports, parks
Housing / community	Housing partnerships for year-round workers	Reuse/repair buildings for housing; local jobs

Talk with a partner: What is one similarity? What is one difference?

Different voters may reasonably prioritize different issues.

Fact or Opinion?

Facts can be checked. Opinions tell what someone believes, prefers, or judges.

“Avery’s platform includes coastal-restoration projects.”	FACT
“Jordan’s platform includes after-school programs.”	FACT
“Transportation is the most important issue.”	OPINION
“Every voter should care most about beaches.”	OPINION

Campaign rule: You may use opinions — but you must not pretend an opinion is a fact.

Fair Campaign Rules

Both teams get the same time, materials, and display opportunities.

- Use only accurate facts from the official fictional platform sheet.
- Do not insult, threaten, pressure, or offer rewards for votes.
- Do not use real party names, logos, slogans, or real 2026 campaign messages.
- Explain what your candidate plans to do — do not call the other candidate “bad.”
- Voters may keep their choice private.
- After the count, both teams congratulate one another and clean up together.

Respect the voter’s right to choose differently.

Campaign Team Jobs

RESEARCHER / FACT-CHECKER	Find the exact platform fact and check accuracy.
ARTIST / DESIGNER	Make posters and flyers clear and easy to read.
SPEAKER	Practice the speech and answer questions using platform facts.
MATERIALS MANAGER	Keep supplies organized and help the team meet deadlines.
RESPECT MONITOR	Remind the team to disagree with ideas respectfully.

Build a Persuasive Poster or Flyer

A strong campaign product has five parts.

1. **CANDIDATE NAME**
2. **SLOGAN**
3. **ONE ISSUE**
4. **ACCURATE PLATFORM FACT**
5. **REASON IT MATTERS**

Before coloring or finalizing: FACT-CHECK!

Can a teammate point to the exact platform sentence that supports your claim?

Campaign Speech Sentence Starters

Grade 1 may use 4 sentence frames. Grade 2 can add two reasons and answer one question.

Hello, MVPCS! I am speaking for _____.

Our campaign slogan is “_____.”

One issue we care about is _____.

The official platform says _____.

This matters to Martha’s Vineyard / Massachusetts because _____.

I think this idea would help by _____.

Please learn about both candidates and vote for the ideas that matter most to you.

Thank you for listening respectfully.

Campaign Forum: Fair Questions for Both Teams

Ask the same question to both campaigns and give equal response time.

What would your candidate focus on for schools or children?

What would your candidate do about the environment or storms?

What does your candidate say about transportation?

How would your candidate approach year-round housing or community needs?

Which platform idea does your team think matters most — and why?

Forum norm: answer with platform facts, not attacks.

Election Day: November 3, 2026

Schoolwide mock election procedures.

1. Learn about both candidates
2. Enter the polling place quietly
3. Mark ONE choice privately
4. Put the ballot in the ballot box
5. Receive an “I Voted” badge
6. Count with observers from both teams
7. Announce the result respectfully
8. Reflect: What made the election fair?

No campaigning at the voting table. Voters should be able to choose privately and without pressure.

The real Massachusetts state election is also November 3, 2026. The classroom ballot is fictional.

After the Vote: Democracy Continues

The result is the end of the campaign — not the end of the community.

CONGRATULATE

Both teams thank one another for helping voters learn about the issues.

REFLECT

What made the election fair? What did you learn about the Governor’s job?

KEEP WORKING TOGETHER

People can make different choices and still be one school community.

“I heard an idea I disagreed with. I showed respect by…”

Massachusetts Standards Connection

The strongest match is Grade 1 Topic 1: Civics — communities, elections, and leadership.

HSS.1.T1.03	A leader is a group member with extra responsibility.
HSS.1.T1.04	Describe qualities of good leaders.
HSS.1.T1.05	Explain how voting can make fair decisions or choose leaders.
HSS.1.T1.06	Explain that an election is voting to select leaders.
HSS.1.T1.07	Identify elected leaders, including the Governor of Massachusetts, and explain their roles.
HSS.1.T1.08	Citizens elect leaders and pay attention to how they serve.
HSS.2.T4.02	Grade 2 extension: countries have governments, leaders, citizens, and purposes such as education and security.

Source: Massachusetts DESE 2018 History and Social Science Curriculum Framework / Standards Navigator.

Teacher Resources: Videos, Websites & Read-Alouds

Use the QR codes in the Teacher Guide for quick access.

MA KIDS' ZONE

Governor's Office and State House information from the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth.

PBS KIDS

"Together We Can: Election" — short early-elementary voting video.

GPB EDUCATION

"What Does a Governor Do?" — public-media explainer; compare Georgia examples with Massachusetts.

Read-alouds in the Teacher Guide: Duck for President • Grace for President • Vote for Our Future!

The Teacher Guide contains clickable source links, lesson plans, answer keys, differentiation, and Election Day setup.