RUNNING A SOCIAL MEDIA ELECTION CAMPAIGN

How can candidates connect with voters?

Experience a modern election campaign in your classroom.

❶ As a class, choose 4 or 5 issues that are important to the students. For example, you may like to look at issues related to the health or education of rural and remote youth, job opportunities for young people or environmental issues that impact upon your local area.

❷ Ask students to work individually or in small groups to come up with ideas to deal with 2 or 3 of the chosen issues. For example, they may decide to increase funding for sports programs in rural schools, or to ban fishing in marine parks.

❸ The next step is for students to decide how to advertise their ideas to the people of Australia. Many candidates and parliamentarians use social media, such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Ask the students to choose 1 or 2 social media websites.

❹ Messages need to fit the website. For example, tweets must be no longer than 280 characters, and Instagram posts need a picture or video. Ask students to design between 3 and 5 posts explaining their ideas.

❺ Ask students to present their social media posts. Put the posts on a wall in the classroom. Give each student 3 to 5 post-it notes to 'like' and comment on other students' posts.

❻ As a class, discuss the following questions:

- Why did the students choose the sites they did? Who was their intended audience?

- How effective is social media as a tool for political messages? Who does it reach? Who does it leave out? If there are people it doesn't reach, how might a candidate or parliamentarian reach those people?

- What are the risks to candidates and parliamentarians when using social media platforms?

- How can students and other members of the community find out who their representatives are, at the local, state and federal levels of government?

- How can the students use social media to engage with their representatives and with their community? Discuss examples of social media campaigns which have had an impact on the community or the world.

ⓘ This activity does not include holding an election. For information and resources on class elections please go to **education.aec.gov.au/getvoting**

Curriculum links

Year 5   (ACHASSK116)

Year 6   (ACHASSK145)

Year 8   (ACHCK061)

Year 9   (ACHCK076)