

Nearly 400 seventh and eighth grade students voted during mock elections at West Middle School

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Daily Leader

Before they become legal registered voters later in life, some students at Liberal's West Middle School saw what it was like to take part in an election on Monday and Tuesday.

Some students were assigned to sign people in to vote, and others served as security guards as many seventh and eighth graders took part in a mock election at the school.

WMS teacher Naomi Vargas said students were taken out of language arts classes Monday and Tuesday in order to take part in the voting process as part of history classes at the school.



Vargas said a similar project was done with students during the 2004 election, and the lesson helps history students learn about electoral college, as well as the history of presidential elections in the United States.

"The electoral college is a tough concept, but I think after (Tuesday night), they will have a better understanding of it," she said.

"Their assignment is I give them a United States map, and they have to stay up as late as they can (Tuesday). They have to put down who got which state."

A recent fad has media outlets coloring states red and blue, depending on which candidate wins that state. Vargas said WMS students did not have to do this, however.

"They have to stay up as late as they can," she said. "Hopefully, they'll have enough sense to check the Internet to see the states they missed."

## Students participate in election experience

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Despite the late hours students put in, Vargas said she will not allow kids to be late for class, and they must have the assignments turned in on time. For those who voted Tuesday, that means Thursday is the deadline, with today being the deadline for Monday voters. "I'm on the block schedule," she said.

Vargas estimated about 400 students voted in Tuesday's mock election.