**1 Primaries**
A state-level election held before a general election to choose each party’s candidate for nomination.

**2 Nominee**
A person selected by others to run for office is the nominee. Nominees may be selected in primary elections or caucuses.

**3 National Conventions**
An official meeting of the delegates of a political party where they choose their candidates and decide upon their party platform.

**4 Running Mate**
The chosen candidate picks a political colleague to run with him or her in the presidential election and who – if elected – will become Vice President.

**5 Platform**
A political party’s formal written statement of its principles and goals.

**6 Electoral College**
A group of delegates – also called electors – who formally elect the president of the USA.

**7 Caucus**
A local meeting of members of a political party for the purpose of choosing candidates for an election.

**8 Candidate**
A person who is running for an elective office.

**9 Stump Speech**
A political speech on a campaign tour outlining a candidate’s core messages.

**10 Campaign**
The period of time before an election when candidates try to persuade people to vote for them.

**11 Front Runner**
The political candidate who is considered most popular or most likely to win.

**12 Poll**
A survey of people (usually voters) that is taken to find out which candidate they might vote for.

**13 Debate**
A televised program during which candidates state and defend their positions on major issues.

**14 Dark Horse**
A candidate who is unexpectedly nominated and about whom little is known.
15 Swing State
A state of the U.S. in which the Democratic and Republican candidates both have a good chance of winning.

16 Blue State
A state where people tend to vote for the Democratic Party.

17 Red State
A state where people tend to vote for the Republican Party.

18 Super Tuesday
An important day in early March when a large number of states hold primary elections.

19 Ballot
A piece of paper listing the candidates running for office. It is used to cast a vote.

20 Spin Doctor
A political adviser employed by a campaign to ensure that a candidate receives the best possible publicity.

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