



Voter Education Report

AUGUST 2024



DR. THESSALIA MERIVAKI

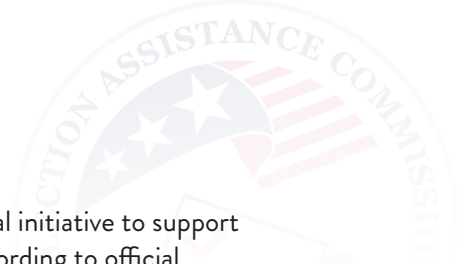
Associate Teaching Professor / Associate Research Professor
McCourt School of Public Policy / Massive Data Institute
Georgetown University
125 E St NW, Washington, DC 20001
thessalia.merivaki@georgetown.edu



DR. MARA SUTTMANN-LEA

Associate Professor
Department of Government and International Relations
Connecticut College
270 Mohegan Ave, New London CT, 06320
csuttmann@conncoll.edu

Executive Summary



The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 marked the first coordinated federal initiative to support states and localities in designing and implementing voter education programs. According to official reports submitted to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC), all states had established some type of voter education program since 2003, following HAVA’s narrow, but also abstract enough definition of voter education. This definition included efforts to educate voters about voting technology through demonstrations and toll-free hotlines, and to familiarize prospective young voters with the voting process through mock elections.¹ A comparison of states’ HAVA Voter Education plans shows substantial variation in how institutionalized these programs are, whether they are mandated for local election jurisdictions, and how they are tracked and evaluated.²

Election officials across the United States are responsible for informing their constituents about what is needed to vote. They have several tools in their toolbox, from social media and in-person events to paid advertising and collaborations with government and community partners. However, we have little information on what toolboxes look like across the states. Even though every state and local jurisdiction “does” voter education, our knowledge about which activities states engage in during an election cycle is limited due to inadequate data collection and reporting. Beyond the availability of federal, state, and local funding for elections, or states’ communications on social media, we lack a more complete story of how exactly states and localities share information about voting processes, the overall process of election administration, as well as how elections are kept safe and secure.

This study takes the first step to build a state-by-state voter education program data collection infrastructure since HAVA, starting with state election offices. Between January 2023 and May 2023, we conducted in-depth interviews with officials from select states to gauge their views about voter education in their states (Phase I). These interviews helped us design a survey, which we pre-tested in April 2023 with officials from Phase I and presented to the U.S. EAC’s Standards Board Membership meeting in April 2023. The survey was administered to all states, the District of Columbia, and four U.S. territories between May 2023 and October 2023 (Phase II).³ This project is the first effort to document variation in voter education policies and resources allocated to voter education at the state level since HAVA, as well as specific voter education activities and modes of outreach.

Among the key findings are:

- Robust commitment to ensuring that voters are informed about the election process and building trust in the integrity of elections.
- Evidence of professionalization, as illustrated by positions like Public Information Officers / Communications Directors.
- Investment in partnerships and collaboration with federal and state agencies, national professional associations, community partners, and the media.
- Persistent need for continuous funding streams to support state and local election offices.
- Evolving voter education needs in response to changing information environments and threats.

In this report, we present the topline findings regarding states’ voter education strategy, capacity, funding needs, ongoing challenges, and identify areas for future research.

¹ The Help America Vote Act: https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/eac_assets/1/6/HAVA41.PDF.

² Merivaki, Thessalia, and Mara Suttman-Lea. “Designing Voter Education Across the States: State Responses to the Help America Vote Act.” *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy* 21, no. 1 (2022): 46-59.

³ We surveyed the U.S. territories that are represented in the EAC Standards Board: Guam, Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Puerto Rico. The Northern Mariana Islands are not represented on the Standards Board and were not surveyed.



Phase I: Gauging state-level commitment to voter education and identifying needs for robust voter education and outreach.

HAVA provided the first systematic opportunity for states to institutionalize their voter education and outreach efforts with voter education plans. HAVA Section 254 (a)(3) instructed states to design programs for “voter education, election official education and training, and poll worker training,” to be included in each state’s HAVA implementation plan, which was required to receive HAVA funds (as specified in Section 253). Aside from the requirement to submit a plan, however, HAVA does not include provisions for how to determine whether states enacted the programs listed in their plans. Despite this limitation, researchers have documented that states have built upon their initial HAVA plans and have been allocating resources to providing voters with information about how the election process works, from registering to vote to casting a ballot that counts.⁴

Given the timespan since the adoption of HAVA, it is not surprising that state election offices today lack institutional knowledge about the development and evolution of their HAVA voter education programs, and the extent to which there are differences between voter education efforts as specified in HAVA and programs managed and run by states independently. This is both the result of election office turnover and challenges in consistent record keeping. To better understand these dynamics, particularly as they relate to the evolution of voter education from 2002 to the present, we contacted election offices in 12 states to recruit officials to participate in an hour-long virtual interview with the research team, which would be recorded for transcription purposes.⁵

Between January and May 2023, we conducted semi-structured interviews with officials from seven state election offices: Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, and Texas.

In this section, we organize our findings around three themes:

- Voter education strategy and institutional knowledge since the enactment of HAVA;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of voter education efforts;
- Addressing gaps between state and local election offices.

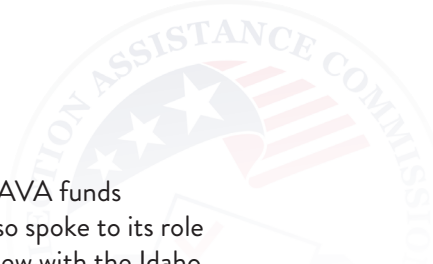
Responses from these interviews played a key role in the development of a survey, which we administered in Phase II of this project.

i. Voter education strategy and institutional knowledge post-HAVA

Given HAVA’s central role in instigating commitments to voter education across the states, we began each of our interviews asking respondents about their office’s relationship with HAVA’s voter education requirements. A lack of institutional knowledge about the role of HAVA in states’ voter education approach was a common but not consistent theme. Among the election officials we interviewed in Phase I, only one – the now former Iowa official – noted that “...between our executive leadership and elections staff, we have one person who was on staff when HAVA was rolled out...he is still in elections, so he has a lot of institutional knowledge on the preparation and planning.”

⁴ Merivaki, Thessalia, and Mara Suttman-Lea. “Can electoral management bodies expand the pool of registered voters? Examining the effects of face-to-face, remote, traditional, and social media outreach.” *Policy Studies* 44, no. 3 (2023): 377-407.

⁵ Mississippi State University, Office of Research and Compliance, IRB Protocol # 22476.



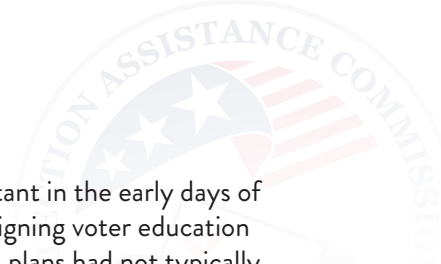
Election officials who had institutional knowledge about the use and evolution of HAVA funds consistently offered insights about its value for election equipment upgrades but also spoke to its role in voter education for the public on using new voting equipment. During our interview with the Idaho official, he noted key “inflection points” in voter education related to HAVA. “Probably around the 2006 election was the first introduction of a lot of voting equipment and specifically accessible voting. I think there was an effort to do some education.”

North Carolina engaged in similar voter education efforts using HAVA funds as voting equipment was replaced in 2006. As the North Carolina official explained: “I came to work for the State Board of Elections in 2006 because of the HAVA funds and the replacement of voting equipment in our state in that year. So, there was a little bit of funding, I think, used to educate the public on the new voting systems and uniformity that we had statewide at that point. And then there was obviously a lull between those funds through HAVA and the most recent funding.”

This kind of election staff retention and institutional knowledge dating back to the early 2000s is unique in the election space. Thus, there is important context missing for understanding how voter education programs evolved since HAVA rolled out. Many of the election officials with whom we spoke noted the lull between the original allocation of HAVA funding at the policy’s inception and the slew of emergency resources marked for elections through HAVA and other federal grants, such as the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in response to pandemic needs for the 2020 election, as well as the ongoing need for more consistent support from the federal government.

The New York official highlighted what they termed the “sea change” as a result of the initial HAVA plans and critical shifts instigated by the policy, including “the switch from levers to scanners and ballot marking devices, the funding of all that outreach and voter education dollars for poll site improvements, dollars for educating voters and inspectors... I think before HAVA, there really wasn’t an effort of [voter education]. You came in, and you voted, or you didn’t, and people didn’t view it as important.” Interview responses revealed a need for ongoing support from the federal government not tied to election crises, with a persistent need to replace outdated voting technology. “We’re grateful for the HAVA funding,” noted the New York official, “but all those machines are now at the end of life.” As HAVA allowed states to modernize voting systems and built voter education programs around how to use voting technology, these comments strongly signal that such needs need to be met not only to ensure that voting systems are up to date but also to sustain voter education efforts.

As far as the role of HAVA funds in shaping states’ voter education programs beyond informing voters about using voting technology, election officials we interviewed universally stressed the non-negotiable need for HAVA support in addressing security and misinformation challenges since the 2016 election. In Texas, the - now former - official could not “underscore” the impact of HAVA enough. “The most helpful aspect,” he said, “was not just the original HAVA dispersing of funds that aided localities in the purchasing of voting machines... but also election security funds. Because after 2016, my job got almost 50 percent, probably more than 50 percent of it was addressing concerns about election security after the 2016 election, and probably even more so after the 2020 election.” He also highlighted the value of having “concrete” funds for communicating to voters about the state’s paper voting record requirements. “I think it will be extremely important for me and our office to communicate to voters who have concerns about not having a paper record of their vote in Texas that is ahead of schedule... that has done a lot to increase voter confidence and made my job a lot easier. It’s helped us turn down the temperature, decrease the animosity and skepticism about voting systems that has only risen in recent years.”



The availability of these funds for rapid emergency responses was especially important in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, even in states where HAVA was not a big driver for designing voter education strategies. The election official from Kentucky noted that while the original HAVA plans had not typically played a significant role in their outreach to voters, CARES Act funding was essential for their responses to COVID-19. “We’ve had to be very reactive to the challenges we face that have been very novel ones,” he commented. “Obviously in 2020 we had not just new funding from Congress for upgrading HAVA funds to upgrade our voting equipment, but we also got CARES’ Act money. And we had quite a bit of freedom in terms of how to use that to save our election.”

HAVA funds also played a critical role in another common strategy developed in response to the pandemic: campaigns to inform voters about alternative options to vote – primarily absentee or mail – to limit the risks to voters and election workers posed by the COVID-19 virus. “When the first case of COVID hit Idaho,” recalled the Idaho official, “the deadline to mail out absentee ballots was less than two weeks away, and we pivoted on the fly to an all-absentee election. And so, because we went in on very short order to an all-absentee election, the state for the first time sent a mailing to all registered voters, basically saying, ‘Hey, you have to request your absentee ballot to participate. Here’s a pre-populated form. Here’s how you can do it’.... I actually think a great byproduct of that was we spun up online absentee requests which had not existed and probably wouldn’t exist if it wasn’t for the pandemic.”

Reflecting on their broader voter education strategies revolving around concerted efforts to provide accurate information to voters, officials spoke of the challenges in finding balance in providing fundamental information and responding to false claims circulating about elections in their states. “In 2022,” recalled the former Iowa official, “it wasn’t that we were automatically pushing stuff out every day because sometimes that would backfire and stir up more people about something that maybe they hadn’t considered to be an issue. But since then... we try to keep an eye out for things, and if we see a trend, a topic gaining steam, maybe then we’ll start to put out some preemptive statements, even if they aren’t commenting on our social media or sending something directly to us.”

Whereas the original voter education components of HAVA were a response to voting technology-driven changes, they instigated an ongoing, if at times inconsistent, development of HAVA voter education strategies that are both responsive and preventative. The New York official offered an analogy of voter education as “preventative medicine,” observing “it has evolved over... the past decade or so to a more preventative approach, right? Because, certainly, if we’re doing it, we’re taking steps, preventative measures to protect our health, we’re living a better, more fulfilled, healthier life. Right? So, it’s sort of the same thing... we are doing. Can we move towards the preventative? Let’s not look at elections in terms of this event, let’s try to look more holistically, and really push that elections are the vehicle for civic engagement. They are the vehicle for community building and development.”

In short, inquiring about a voter education “strategy” at any given moment in time seems to be reflective of whatever crisis or election administrative change election officials are facing. Election officials view voter education strategies not as one-off occurrences, but as a critical component to adapt to changing information communication requirements and threat environments.

Reflecting on the work they did in the lead up to the 2022 election, the official we spoke with from Michigan recalled that they wanted to ensure voters had access to accurate information about voting options in their state. The state elections office produced a series of short videos explaining critical parts of election administration in Michigan, like the processing of election night results and absentee ballot processing, as a step to prevent voter confusion.

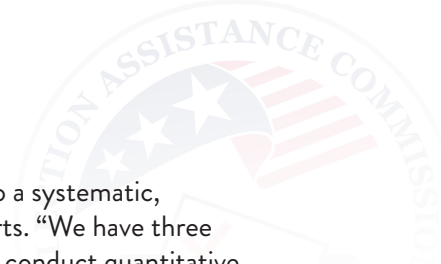


The lingering presence of misinformation and partisan debate in recent elections have left less room for an in-depth discussion of planned strategies for addressing the nuts and bolts of voter education that vary less from election-to-election – education efforts teaching voters how to successfully register, vote, and cast a ballot that counts. Some referenced efforts pertaining to specific tools, such as Texas’ HAVA funded initiative to drive voters to their one-stop-shop website for voter information, or Kentucky’s “campaign-style” efforts in their bid to inform voters of new absentee voting options during the 2020 election cycle. In both states, these communication strategies have now become a part of the election office’s approach to voter education. But overall, crisis-driven responses to questions about voter education strategy suggest that voter education strategies are reflective of a dynamic election administration landscape, one that is constantly evolving, context-driven, and requires consistent funding and support in response to new threats to the election information ecosystem.

ii. Evaluating effectiveness of voter education efforts.

During our interviews, state election officials consistently expressed interest in voter education program evaluation and assessment. Many bemoaned their lack of capacity to engage in concrete, systematic evaluation of their voter education and outreach efforts. Election officials spoke of cursory, 30,000-foot view insights gained from data like traffic to websites, clicks or engagements on social media links, and increases in voter participation, particularly when new methods of voting become available. “I’m aware how much more could be done to actually do proper assessment and evaluation of what we do,” said the Michigan official. “The reality is we are taking this sort of all-hands, all-directions approach to try and get everything out, and we are using all of our capacity to get it done, and we are not doing as much in terms of tracking and evaluation. We are doing what I would say is sort of basic metrics tracking in terms of how many people an ad is reaching, whether it is on social media, whether it is in the newspapers or on the radio. We are tracking impressions and things like that.”

In Kentucky, the official highlighted an astronomical increase in absentee ballot usage as evidence of the effectiveness of their campaign to inform voters about absentee voting options, while at the same time acknowledging “we don’t have the budget or the staffing for any sort of a formal process. This is the smallest office by funding in the executive branch of the Kentucky state government... But I can tell you the way that we track this is the results of the elections themselves. So, for example, in every election in my political lifetime, going back to the early 90s, 98 percent of the voters in our state voted on Election Day in person and about two percent voted by absentee ballot. We knew in 2020 that wasn’t going to be workable. And so, we worked really hard through media interviews, through social media, through notifications sent to voters from our state board of elections, mailings that had information about new voting options in 2020, and we didn’t know if it was going to work, if it was going to actually register and if people would trust it. But they actually did in the 2020 primary election...75 percent of our voters used the absentee ballot, and we had the highest primary turnout we’ve ever had. So, to go from two percent absentee to 75 percent overnight was pretty remarkable.”




Of the election officials we interviewed, only the Texas official provided insight into a systematic, institutionalized means of assessing the effectiveness of their voter education efforts. “We have three sets of polls throughout the voter education campaign,” he shared. “What we do is conduct quantitative research polls before and after the primary to assess the effectiveness of our voter education campaign materials. So, we’ve got a series of questions we like to keep the same through every election cycle so we can compare cycle to cycle.” Among these questions is whether voters saw ads coming from the state election office (votetexas.gov), whether seeing an ad encouraged voters to visit the state election website to get more information about voting, and whether these ads made voters better informed about voter ID requirements. Alongside quantitative surveys, Texas also conducts focus groups to evaluate their efforts’ effectiveness for specific groups of voters. In one year, they focused on English and Spanish-speaking voters to assess the accessibility of voter education materials for voters whose primary language is not English. They also had efforts focusing on older, younger, and middle-aged voters, and an additional set of groups for voters with disabilities. For the latter group, they were especially interested in “how voters with disabilities found our campaign assets to include them, whether it gave them enough information so that they could independently seek more information about how to cast a ballot if they’re disabled.”

Overall, state election officials we interviewed typically expressed a desire for more systematic, consistent evaluation efforts and capacities (and the means to do so). “The data is out there,” said the Idaho official, “it’s just a matter of trying to figure out how you make the correlations right with any research related to elections... there are so many factors at play.” Recalling their experiences learning about efforts done by other states to gauge voters’ attitudes on how elections are run in their jurisdiction or state, the North Carolina official noted that they were “always envious when they hear of other states who have been able to do polling and surveys. At a recent conference I heard... I believe it was Texas, that they learned how this really simple YouTube video was actually more effective than some of the more highly crafted professional pieces.” In our conversations with election officials, surveys of voters take place through collaborations between election offices and academics, but often election offices conduct voter satisfaction surveys internally, or by contracting with polling firms. The availability of funds to allocate on voter surveys, however, is a consistent concern even among states who have done them in the past, like Texas.

Finally, respondents also reflected on the need for assessment of poll worker recruitment efforts and training. Some highlighted the relationship between the challenges of working with an aging population of poll workers and the limited capacity of local election offices to do assessments of poll worker performance. “I think in general we’re moving towards more of an assessment environment,” the New York official offered. “I looked at the training for inspectors. And I said, ‘well, you put 100 people in a room. Many of them are senior citizens, you don’t use a microphone, so none of them can hear you. They don’t want to ask a question because they don’t want to feel stupid, or that they’re not listening, but they can’t hear you.’ Right, so we have revamped the whole thing. And I said, look, we have to model the behavior you want them to do, right?... Then I said, ‘well, we have to do surveys because we have to see the impact. And I think that’s something that does not come automatically to election officials. They’re sort of always working in this crisis and intense period, and they don’t even think about measuring impact.” These insights strongly reflect ongoing efforts by election offices to improve the voter experience starting with training and recruitment of poll workers, which are difficult to capture, given the absence of any systematic tracking of poll worker recruitment programs.

One election official noted that they have also begun to consider the security and well-being of election offices and poll workers in their universe of assessments. Reflecting on the effects of their campaign to educate voters on key election administration processes and deter bad actors from attacking polling places, the Michigan official recalled, “I do think many of our messages got through... when I look at the fact that there were no attacks on our polling places or anything like that in 2022, I think that was partly because of our messaging campaign through earned and paid media where we made sure the word was out that it



was illegal, that it wouldn't be tolerated.” Michigan’s Democracy MVP Program is an example of these messaging efforts. It was explicitly designed to build trust in the integrity of the election process by sharing the experiences of individuals who have served as election workers.⁶

An interest in assessing the experiences and performance of poll workers showcases the dynamic, holistic, and interconnected ways in which many state election offices view voter education. It not only involves direct communications between officials and voters, but education and outreach for local offices and poll workers to support better, more accessible voting experiences. For example, the former Iowa official highlighted how they consider education of local officials and poll workers on voter accessibility a key component of their working relationship. “I’m trying to develop an accessibility coordinator program so that in each precinct we could get one, but I’m starting small and just saying ‘could we get one in each of the 99 counties? Have a poll worker who is designated as the accessibility coordinator for that county and so they would be truly, fully trained in etiquette and communication and all of the accessible voting equipment, and then they could help ensure that all of the polling places in that county are truly accessible... So, that’s an area where I really intend to dedicate a lot of time this year, and going forward in voter education and making sure the disability community really becomes much more comfortable and feels much more welcomed at the polling places. But an aspect of that is really making a push with the local election officials and the poll workers in their education and training. So, it’s not... directly voter education, but still asking those voters and stakeholders to be at the table to help with the education.”

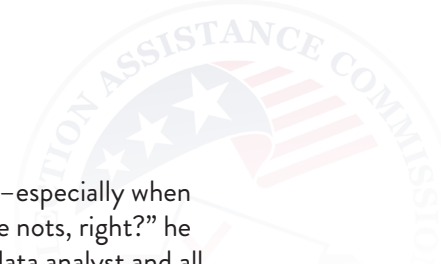
iii. Addressing gaps between state and local election offices.

Prior to the development of any systematic data collection instrument, we were interested in understanding state election offices’ perceptions of information gaps: voters or groups of voters that don’t have access to the information needed to navigate the voting and election process, but also anywhere else additional information might be needed.

Interestingly, in response to this question, state election officials often spoke of gaps or tensions between voter education efforts initiated by the state elections office and the needs and discretion of local election officials. The New York official felt their office had a great relationship with most counties, but that there were some that “sort of cling to ‘it’s my board, my rules,’ and getting information is like pulling teeth.” This kind of response identifies information gaps faced by state election offices in their relationship with local election offices. The New York official told us, for instance, that she was trying to get funding to create a customer management system so they can really track their inquiries and conversations with counties. They felt it would “really make it easier for the counties, and it will also make it easier for us, because we get a lot of the same questions. And I’m continually going back through my e-mail and searching.”

Similarly, the former Iowa official spoke of gaps between state and local election offices in training local offices on how to use state-developed tool kits and communicate with voters. She also acknowledged the inordinate burden on local election offices, especially those with responsibilities outside of election offices. “There are so many different things they could communicate to the public or to their immediate community,” she observed. “But I know they’re busy, and so a lot of them don’t have the ability to take the time to think through and say ‘ok, here are the things I want to talk about this week, and here are the things I’m going to post next week, and here are some videos I’m going to get started.’” State tool kits thus become a roadmap for beleaguered local election officials that nevertheless would benefit from additional training and support.

⁶ U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Office of the Inspector General. December 12, 2022. “Management Advisory 23-01: Define voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote.” Available at: https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/OIG/Management_Advisory_23-01.pdf.



The Idaho official highlighted similar challenges in supporting local election offices –especially when dealing with small counties that have limited resources. “There’s the haves and have nots, right?” he noted. Ada County “was fortunate to have” both a communications person and a data analyst and all the spoils that come with being the largest jurisdiction in the state... but 50 percent of our counties are probably under 10,000, maybe even under 5,000 [registered voters.] So, they don’t have those resources. The state can help by producing material that we can send out because we have the resources, and that people can easily modify.”

The North Carolina official highlighted a variation on a similar theme. While she didn’t feel the state had an alarming number of media gaps, she recognized that they still have “gaps for people in rural communities who do not have a local paper” or a lack of individual subscriptions to local papers. “So, I think that’s why we put such an emphasis on social media, because even through working two or three jobs, they are able to do that.” She also highlighted gaps in communicating changes in voting requirements and election laws to voters. “What doesn’t seem like a big change to us because we eat, sleep, and breathe this is a big change to folks who may only vote in the presidential election year. So, as we’ve had things change like the number of witnesses required for our absentee by mail, we’ve tried to make sure we push out as much as we can.” The former Texas official spoke of a similar effort to address information gaps in response to changes in the state’s voter ID requirement, although these education efforts were mandated through the state legislature. As a result of this mandate, the state election office has a dedicated messaging campaign for voter ID, which may help reduce some of the gaps in getting important information to voters that local election offices do not have the capacity to fill.

Some election officials spoke of efforts to fill gaps in their voter education and outreach efforts through partnerships with third-party civil society groups. In Kentucky, the state office has a number of relationships with organizations “across the board,” highlighting that “their politics are all different, their demographics are all different, but we work with the League of Women Voters, rural electric cooperatives, the YMCA Youth Association, we work with anyone that will work with us, honestly, and we have from day one. We’ve really worked hard to try to work with and be seen working with people who are progressive and people who are conservative, and everybody in between so no one thinks we’re playing favorites.” Texas shared how their cooperation with the National Association of Secretaries of States’ (NASS) communications team has helped fill information and outreach gaps. “I have... used their templates for various social media, for graphics, for videos, using our content and incorporating those into the hashtags they are using. The hashtag we’ve always tried to use on any of these kinds of videos is #trustedinfo... it’s just sort of glomming our social media content onto that campaign that I know NASS is really spearheading at the national level.”

Only one official we spoke to - from Michigan - noted what he perceived as “voter gaps,” meaning limitations in the efforts of voters themselves to access the information needed to understand and participate in elections. “I think there are definitely gaps and those follow the typical thought lines of our society, right? So, people who are less likely to be reading the newspaper, watching the news, connected with their communities, are less likely to get the information we’re putting out or that others are putting out.” In response to this perception, he also highlighted their efforts to work with third-party groups to connect with “hard-to-reach” voters. “We try to address that working with community groups,” he reflected, “and I think we’re successful to an extent, and I think there’s lots of people we don’t reach and who others don’t reach. We are still seeing record turnout, and that’s a great thing. But we are also aware of total turnout as a percentage of eligible voters; it’s low across the country. We do a lot of work to try and cover the logistical gaps and remind voters why it’s important that their voice will count.”



Phase II: Tracking Voter Education Programs: The Voter Education Survey

Drawing on insight from our Phase I interviews, in February 2023 we designed an online survey that aimed to capture several dimensions of state-level voter education programs, from states' voter education missions to staffing and budgeting for voter education and outreach programs during every election cycle. The survey included a combination of open- and closed-ended questions, prompting respondents to volunteer information that would further help us understand unique approaches to how states approach voter education that may not be adequately captured with a closed-ended question survey format.

Alongside our interviews from Phase I of the project, we also drew from our previous work on states' HAVA voter education and outreach plans. This was because we wanted to track the continuity in these programs since states were first required to develop their voter education plans. Finally, the U.S. EAC provided substantive guidance in the development of questions that distinguish between voter education and state-led nonpartisan Get Out the Vote (GOTV) activities, which neither HAVA Section 101 nor 251 grants can fund.⁷

The survey was organized around nine themes and included a total of 20 questions⁸:

- Voter Education Mission / Strategic Plan.
- Staffing and Capacity.
- Voter Education Programs.
- Media and Advertising.
- Partnerships with Federal and Statewide Associations.
- Misinformation Strategy.
- Support and Requirements for Local Election Offices.
- Resources for Voter Education.
- Program Assessment.

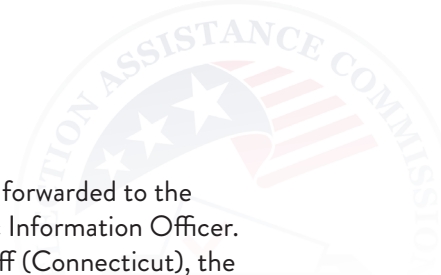
We pre-tested the survey internally and with a select number of state election officials with whom we conducted in-person interviews. We also presented the survey to the U.S. EAC Standards Board Membership in April 2023. After a few revisions based on feedback from the U.S. EAC subject matter experts, we fielded the survey in May 2023, using the online survey platform Qualtrics. We built our list of state election offices from the U.S. EAC's Standards Board Membership roster and added the contact information of the state Chief Election Officials and Election Directors from the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and National Association of State Election Directors (NASSED) directories.⁹

We received submissions from 25 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories (N=28). In Table 1, we present the individuals who submitted a response to the survey by their official title. As the Table shows, most responses were submitted by the state Director of Elections even among states where the Chief Election Official is the Secretary of State. We received responses from five Assistant/Deputy Secretaries of State and two from states where election responsibilities are shared among Election Commissioners.

⁷ U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Office of the Inspector General. December 12, 2022: "Management Advisory 23-01: Define voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote." Available at: https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/OIG/Management_Advisory_23-01.pdf.

⁸ Questionnaire in Appendix.

⁹ U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Standards Board: https://www.eac.gov/about/standards_board. National Association of Secretaries of State membership: <https://www.nass.org/memberships/secretaries-stateleutenant-governors>. National Association of State Election Directors membership: <https://www.nased.org/members>.



In our recruitment email to state election offices, we requested that the survey be forwarded to the person most appropriate to complete it. In some states, that person was the Public Information Officer. In other cases, we received responses from other officials, such as the Chief of Staff (Connecticut), the state’s Election Systems Analyst (Arkansas), and the Ballot Operations Head (Hawaii).

Two different officials from New York and Idaho submitted responses. In the case of New York, we validated the responses by conducting a follow-up interview with the New York Chief Election Official. In the case of Idaho, there were no substantive discrepancies in the responses provided, and we decided to include the submission from the state Communications Director, whose responses were the most complete.¹⁰

Table 1. Responses to the Voter Education Survey by position.

Position	States/U.S. Territories
Director of Elections	12
Public Information Officer (Outreach Director; Communications Director; Constituency Relations)	7
Assistant/Deputy Secretary of State - Elections	5
Other (Chief of Staff; Election Systems Analyst; Ballot Operations Head)	4
Election Commissioner	2

Note: We received two submissions from New York and two from Idaho.

Staffing and capacity

To better understand state capacity in implementing voter education and outreach programs, we asked a series of questions that capture evidence of professionalization of voter communications, with the presence of a designated officer whose explicit duties are voter outreach and communications, and the structure of election staff both in terms of staff size but also in terms of employment status (part-time and full-time).

i. Designated voter education compliance officer.

In this section, we asked whether the state election office has a designated voter education compliance officer or policy to ensure it is complying with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to voter education and outreach, as well as internal codes of conduct, policies, and procedures. Among the 26 responses we received, eight states and one U.S. territory (34.6%) responded that they have a designated compliance officer, with 15 states and one U.S. territory (61.5%) responding that they do not.

¹⁰ We also conducted follow-up interviews and phone calls to validate some information provided that seemed incorrect or incomplete.



ii. Dedicated staff tasked with writing state, federal, or private grant applications.

Since 2002, the federal government has contributed to elections with over \$4,307,969,860 in federal funds, through the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020. Funds are typically awarded in grants, with additional provisions for state-matched funds. In 2020, several states applied for private funds to further support their voting operations, including voter education. Grant activity is, therefore, a key function of state election offices, which makes it important to document what capacity states have insofar as preparing and submitting grant applications and fulfilling reporting requirements.

Among the states that volunteered a response to this question (26), only 35 percent (9) reported having dedicated staff tasked with writing state, federal, or private grant applications. This is a surprising finding, because it can imply low levels of institutional capacity and/or infrastructure when it comes to seeking resources to fund elections. In our conversations with election officials in Iowa and Oregon, we were encouraged to talk to other office holders or staff, such as the Budget Director (Iowa) and the Deputy Elections Director (Oregon). Considering the differences in who we were instructed to contact for questions regarding federal grants, it is possible that such office holders have expertise contained within a broader position description.

iii. Staff devoted to voter education and outreach.

Staff capacity differs notably among the state election offices, which may not be surprising given the variation in population, capacity, and needs. State offices report having designated staff—full-time, part-time, temporary—for education and outreach. Among the states and territory that responded to this question, seven states reported having at least one person with designated voter education duties, and eight states reported staff capacity that ranges between four and six people. As we show in Table 2, the most common position referenced was the Communications Director or Public Information Officer, which is a full-time position. At least 11 states have a designated officer for voter outreach and constituent relations. However, there is evidence of limited capacity for a dedicated voter education program; two states and one U.S. territory reported having no designated staff for voter education.



Table 2. State Election Office Capacity for Voter Education and Outreach

State	Number of Positions	Position Titles
Arizona	4	Deputy Assistant Secretary of State (FT) Outreach Director (FT) Outreach Coordinator (FT) Voting Rights Ambassador (PT)
Arkansas	<i>No Response on this question</i>	
Colorado	0	<i>No Response on this question</i>
Connecticut	5	Chief of Staff and General Counsel (FT) Communications Director (FT) Press Secretary (FT) Director of Civic Engagement and Outreach (FT) Engagement and Outreach Manager (FT)
Delaware	2	State Election Commissioner Community Relations Manager/Public Information Officer
Hawaii	6	Voter Services Section Head (FT) Voter Registration Election Specialist (FT) Voter Education Election Specialist (FT) Election Information Specialist (FT) Voter Services Office Assistant (FT - Vacant) Election Assistant (PT, Vacant)
Idaho	3	Elections Education Coordinator (FT) Communications Director (FT) Communications Manager (FT)
Iowa	<i>No Response on this question</i>	
Kentucky	0	<i>No Response on this question</i>
Maryland	3	Assistant Deputy for Constituent Relations (FT) Deputy Director of Election Reform (FT) Election Management Assistant and Social Media Coordinator (FT)
Massachusetts	<i>No Response on this question</i>	
Mississippi	0	<i>No Response on this question</i>
New Jersey	3	Elections Director (FT) Legislative Director (FT) Communications Director (FT)
New York	4	Director of Public Information (FT) Deputy Director of Public Information (FT) Special Assistant, Public Information (2, FT)

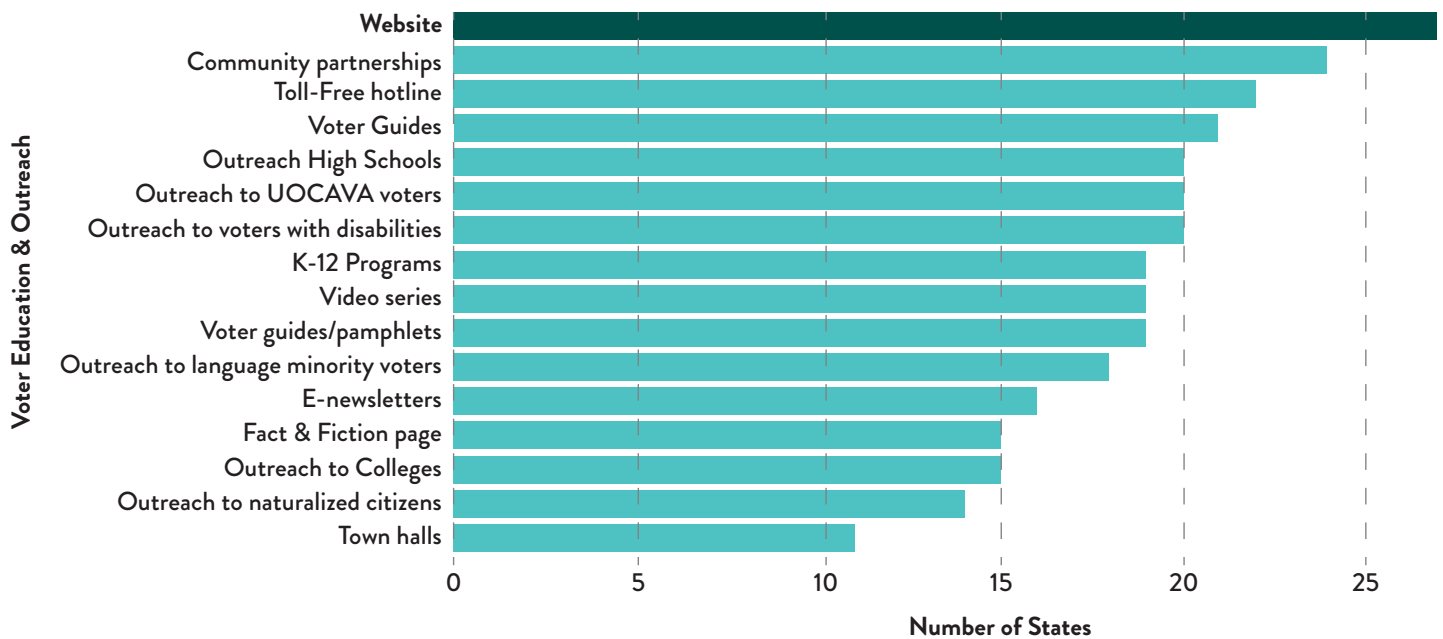


State	Number of Positions	Position Titles
North Carolina	0	Communications Team program specialists Learning management team Voter Registration specialist
North Dakota	0	<i>No Response on this question</i>
Oklahoma	1	Public Information Officer (FT) NVRA coordinator, special projects
Oregon	5	Civic and Elections Education Director (FT) Translation Advisory Council (FT) Deputy Elections Director (FT) Communications Director (FT) Social media manager (FT)
Pennsylvania	1	Civic Engagement & Community Impact Programs Manager (FT)
South Carolina	3	Outreach Director (Vacant) Public Information Officer Director of Legislative Affairs
South Dakota	5	NVRA Coordinator Director, Division of Elections Federal and State Election Coordinator State Election Coordinator Elections Coordinator
U.S. Territories - Guam	0	<i>No Response on this question</i>
U.S. territories - U.S. Virgin Islands	14	Board of Elections Members (PT - Elected for four-year term)
Vermont	<i>No Response on this question</i>	
Virginia	3	External Affairs Manager (FT) External Affairs Assistant (FT) Elections & Registration Specialist (FT)
Washington	4	Voter Education and Outreach (FT) Voter Education and Outreach, K-12 Civics and Voters' Pamphlet (FT) Voter Education and Outreach, College civics and Voters' Pamphlet (FT) Voter Information Services Manager (FT)
Washington, D.C.	<i>No Response on this question</i>	
West Virginia	4	Deputy Secretary & Chief of Staff (FT) General Counsel (FT) Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Communications (FT) Director of Elections (FT) Program Specialist, Communications (FT)

Voter education programs

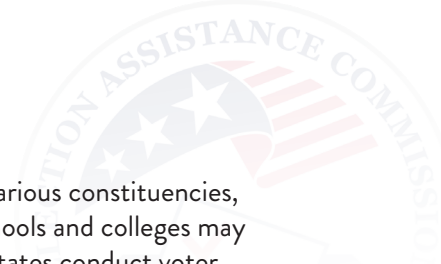
The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) created opportunities for state election offices to innovate in how they approach voter education and outreach. Compared to states' HAVA voter education plans submitted between 2003 and 2013, states have been consistent in meeting the core HAVA requirements around activities that comply with other federal laws, such as the Voting Rights Act (VRA), the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (VAEHA), the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Rehabilitation Act, although we do not have responses from all 50 states, D.C, and the four U.S. territories.¹¹

Figure 1. Voter Education & Outreach Activities



As we show in Figure 1, all states in our sample reported operating an elections website. Not every state reported operating a toll-free hotline, which was one of the activities explicitly mentioned in HAVA relating to voter education. States also reported strong ties with community partners with whom they collaborate every election cycle. When we asked a follow-up question to list up to five civic groups or community partners state election offices regularly work with, organizations who are highly active in the elections network were referenced, such as the League of Women Voters, Common Cause, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Brennan Center for Justice, and the National Federation for the Blind. Beyond national organizations, states reported working with local chapters from the disability community like REVUP VA in Virginia, Disability Rights of West Virginia, and Disability Rights Iowa, among others. States also reported partnerships with high schools and colleges, NBA sports teams, breweries, the Chamber of Commerce, and the AARP. Many states elaborated on these partnerships, with the most common activity being voter registration events.

¹¹ Merivaki, Thessalia, and Mara Suttman-Lea. "Designing Voter Education Across the States: State Responses to the Help America Vote Act." *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy* 21, no. 1 (2022): 46-59.



According to Figure 1, states report conducting voter education and outreach to various constituencies, from K-12 and college students to newly naturalized citizens. Outreach to high schools and colleges may be more established than outreach to naturalized citizens, considering that many states conduct voter registration events and mock elections in high schools. As a constituency, newly naturalized citizens may not seem to be a priority for state election offices, which could be explained by a lack of capacity to reach these voters. Based on our conversations with election officials from Delaware, Iowa, and Texas, it was clear that “outreach” is a relative term, and it can be as narrow or as broad as states’ capacity allows. Our conversation with Oregon election officials validated these testimonies, even for constituencies that states are federally required to service, like language minority voters. When capacity allows, states make intentional efforts to work with community partners to reach communities of interest, such as incarcerated citizens.

A strong majority of the states and U.S. territories in our sample reported producing voter guides or voter pamphlets. When we followed up with a question on how the voter guides are distributed to constituents, 16 states reported making the voter guide available on their website, five reported mailing the voter guide to all registered voters, and two reported that they email it to register voters. Two states reported that they distribute their voter guide by all three methods. Some states clarified that they have both a voter guide, which they post on their website, and a pamphlet with more consolidated information, which they distribute at events and to community partners, schools, and public libraries. One state explicitly noted that voter guides are translated in languages other than English and posted in local newspapers (Washington).

In this thematic section, we were particularly interested in capturing whether states prioritize certain voter education activities over others depending on the election cycle. In our survey, we asked if voter education activities and programs, as we list in Figure 1, take place on an ongoing basis or during federal election cycles. All states reported that these activities take place on an ongoing basis, except for outreach to UOCAVA voters, which three states reported engaging only during federal election cycles.

Among the activities on our list, the usage of video series and the establishment of a fact vs. fiction page on states’ election websites were also popular, although not reported by every state in our sample. These activities reflect intentional efforts by election officials to make information about elections broadly accessible and build trust in elections, and are consistent with recommendations from federal agencies like the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and national stakeholders like the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and National Association of State Election Directors (NASED) to combat election misinformation.¹²

Media & advertising

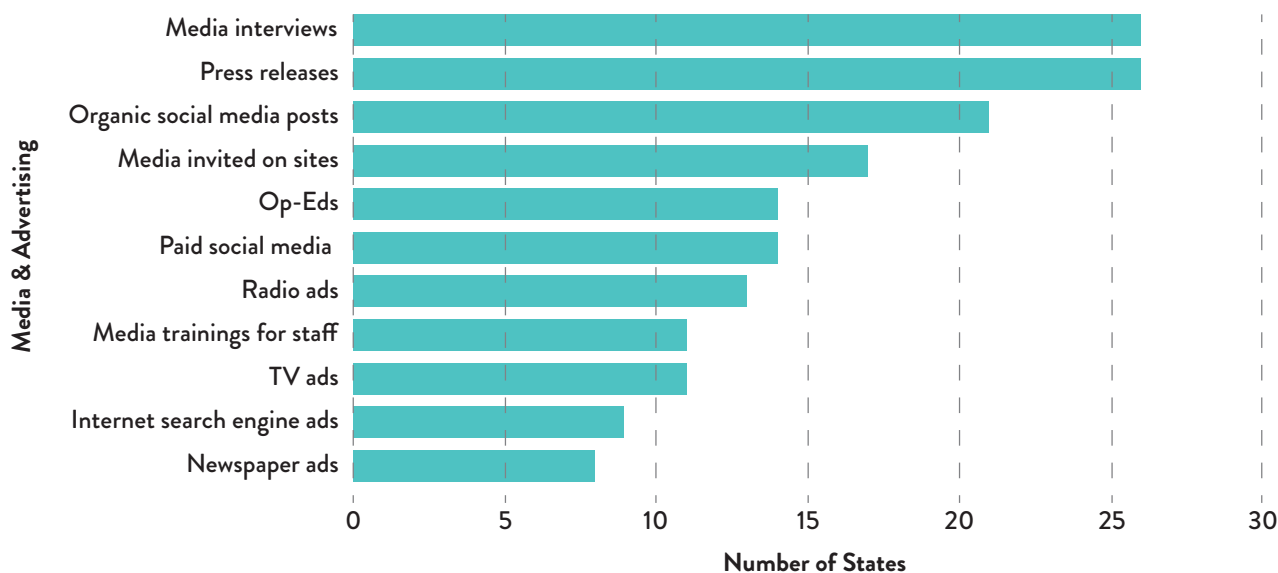
One of the most consistent themes we identified from our in-depth interviews with election offices and the survey responses is the professionalization of the office of voter education and outreach through the establishment of a Public Information Officer or a Communications Director/Team. As we showed in Table 1, at least 11 states have a designated officer tasked with election-related communications. Communications to voters and other stakeholders, like the media, can take place through different channels: traditional media, social media, online, and in-person.

¹² Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency, “Election Security Rumor v. Reality.” Available at: <https://www.cisa.gov/topics/election-security/rumor-vs-reality>.

i. Media & advertising tools

In Figure 2, we present the number of states that confirmed using different media and advertising tools as part of their voter education and outreach efforts. All states that volunteered an answer to this question reported doing media interviews and press releases, with many reporting that they invite journalists on site to observe election processes (17) and write opinion pieces (14). Election staff receive media training in at least four states where an official Public Information Officer does not exist. All states in our sample reported having a working relationship with local and statewide media as part of their voter education efforts. These activities are indicative of the public facing work done by state election offices to increase their visibility among the public even in the absence of a designated communications officer.

Figure 2. Media and Advertising for Voter Education



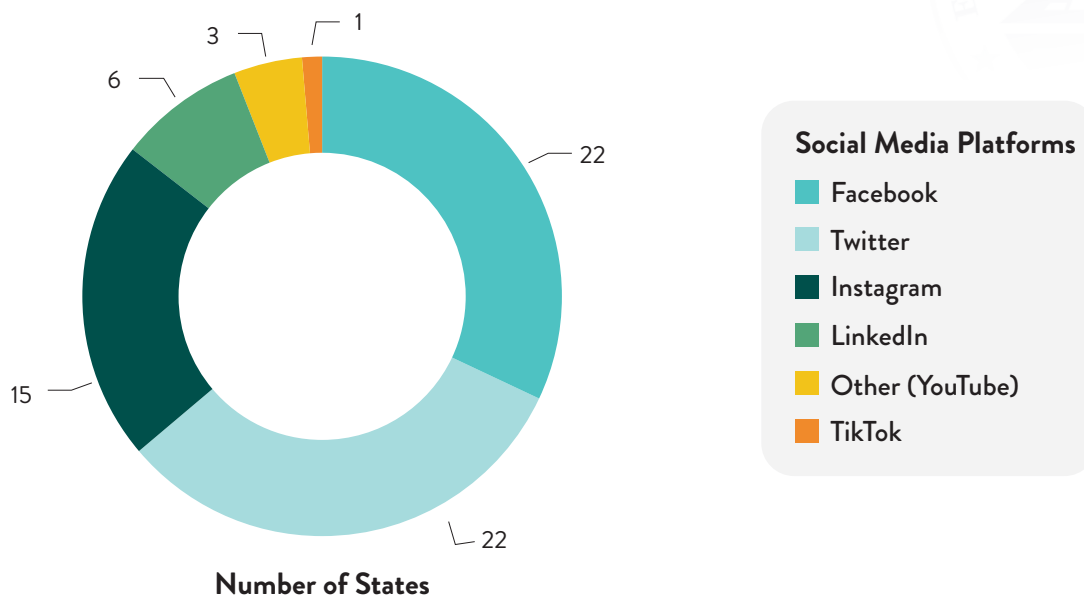
Regarding traditional media, the most common method of advertising among the states and U.S. territories in our sample is radio, followed by TV, and then newspaper advertising. When compared to social media and media interviews or press releases, it may not be surprising that traditional media does not dominate states' media and advertising strategies, at least among the ones in our sample. It is noteworthy, however, that radio ads are more common than TV and newspapers. It is possible that radio ads are more affordable compared to TV ads and may have a broader reach. More research should be done to understand how strategically states spend their resources to share content using different types of media and advertising.

ii. Presence on social media

Perhaps the least surprising finding is that states rely on social media for voter education and outreach. This is consistent with extant research that shows that all states operate at least one official account on social media, with Facebook being the most common platform. Figure 3 confirms this finding. State election offices prefer mainstream platforms like Facebook and Twitter/X, with a few reporting using Instagram and LinkedIn, and some using YouTube. It should be noted that YouTube usage is higher across the states, Washington D.C., and the U.S. territories, than what is captured in the survey. In our conversations with Texas for instance, the former official disclosed that the Texas communications campaign for 2022 relied heavily on YouTube. This information is missing from the survey because Texas did not complete it.



Figure 3. Presence on Social media platforms



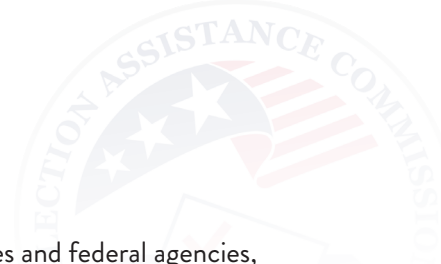
Partnerships with federal and national professional associations

State – and local – election officials operate within a dense network of stakeholders, from federal and state agencies, statewide professional associations, civil society, media, and, of course, voters. The collaboration between these stakeholders is frequently interpreted as evidence of professionalization in election administration, particularly because such collaborations create opportunities to build institutional knowledge and capacity, as well as to network among election officials across the United States.¹³

Partnerships with the federal government continue to strengthen as resources available to state and local election administrators through agencies like the U.S. EAC, whose primary function is to assist and support election officials, remain a necessary part of improving election administration and infrastructure. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) also provides resources touching on cybersecurity and threat assessment. Other national partners, including the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) and the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED), have also made available trust-building communication toolkits.

The misinformation that arises from foreign interference in elections has severely disrupted the election information ecosystem, which creates challenges for election offices insofar as educating voters. Aside from informing them about what is needed to vote, they now must communicate about the safeguards around election administration to reassure voters that elections are safe and secure. These information needs underscore how the definition of “voter education” is constantly changing, and they require innovative and dynamic interventions. Suggesting this research—conducted over the course of one year—will be necessarily ongoing and require updating as the information ecosystem evolves and new threats arise.

¹³ Mattice, Tim. “The Role of Professional Associations in Supporting Election Administration.” *The Future of Election Administration: Cases and Conversations* (2019): 149-156.



i. Partnerships with federal agencies

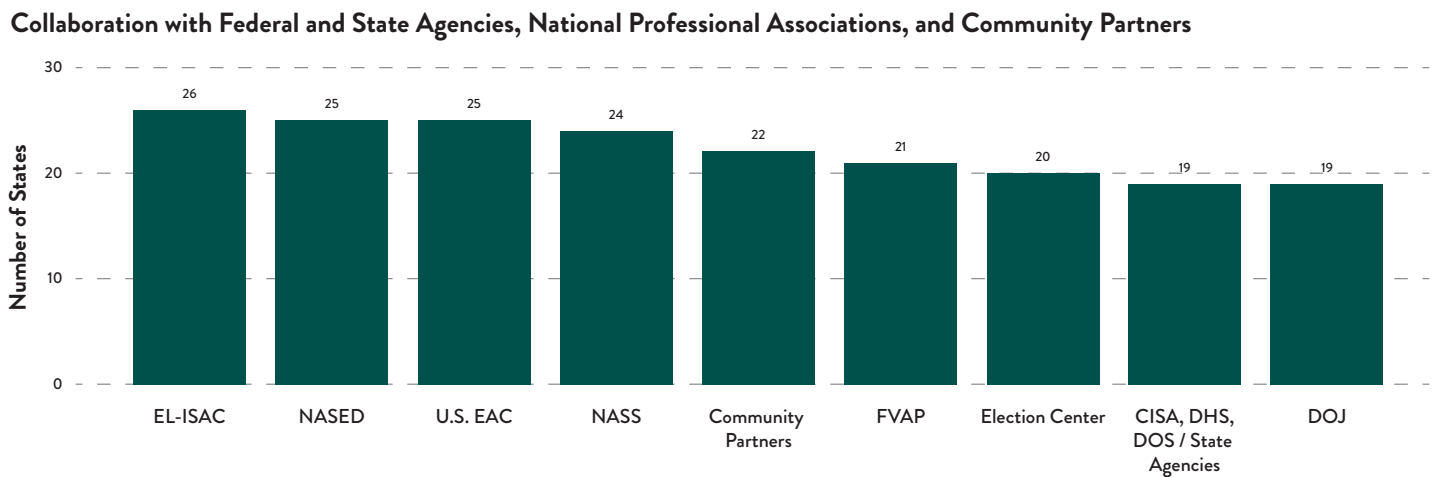
Some of these interventions take place within partnerships between election offices and federal agencies, state agencies, national professional associations, and local community partners. For example, the U.S. EAC is the federal agency designated with administering federal election grants and assisting states with the administration of elections. All states who completed the survey reported working with the U.S. EAC, which is expected considering that the EAC is the key point of contact for the disbursement of federal grants to the states, as well as the management of the biannual Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS).¹⁴ As we show in Figure 4, most states confirm that federal agencies such as CISA and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are key partners, especially when it comes to their security strategy. The same states also confirmed working with the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

ii. Partnerships with national professional associations

While there are more federal entities partnering with elections offices than we capture here,¹⁵ it is important to establish a baseline to identify key partners in the federal government and understand how they complement other partnerships with state agencies, national associations, and civil society. NASS and NASED, for example, are the two most robust professional associations for state election officials that have helped foster the collaboration between states and federal agencies such as CISA, as well as national partners such as the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing & Analysis Center (EI-ISAC).

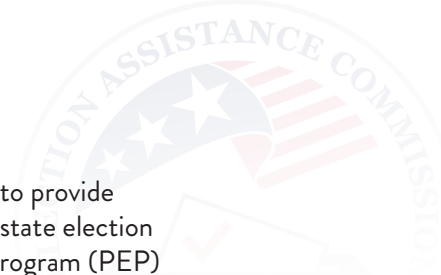
These partnerships have established high standards of professionalization around election administration more broadly, and security more specifically, and have contributed to the development of coordinated public information campaigns to build trust in elections. The NASS #TrustedInfo campaign, and the NASED communication toolkit for election officials are great examples of these campaigns because they reflect a coordinated, multi-partner investment in election information integrity.

Figure 4. Collaboration with Federal and State Agencies, National Professional Associations, and Community Partners.



¹⁴ Figure 4 shows that one state did not report collaborating with the U.S. EAC. We have a missing entry on this item by Oregon, but we consider it an error because Oregon completed all survey items involving federal funding administered by the EAC, such as HAVA and the CARES Act.

¹⁵ Gordon, Grace. Bipartisan Policy Center. "The Federal Role in U.S. Elections Visualized," <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/explainer/visualize-federal-role-elections/>.



The National Association of Election Officials (Election Center), whose mission is to provide professional education for election officials, has been identified as a partner by 20 state election offices who completed our survey. The Election Center’s Professional Education Program (PEP) offers courses in election administration and voter registration, and officials who complete the program receive certification as a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA). This partnership is substantively significant, as it contributes to the professionalization of election administration at both the state and local levels. It also helps amplify new and ongoing collaborations among other associations, like the NASS #TrustedInfo initiative and CISA’s “Tactics of Disinformation” educational series.¹⁶

Countering misinformation strategy

Countering voting-related misinformation has taken a prominent role in states’ communication strategies, both to improve the flow of accurate information coming from state and local election offices and to build resilience against falsehoods about election integrity. In this section, we asked election offices to describe their misinformation strategy – proactive, reactive, or a mix of both – and all responded that they use both strategies. We followed up with a question on what forms each state’s misinformation strategy with respect to relying on partnerships with key stakeholders, like the federal government and different types of media.

As we show in Table 3, there are interesting patterns when comparing states’ misinformation strategies. Among the states and U.S. territories who responded to our survey, only nine confirmed that they include federal and state agencies, news media, paid advertising, and social media in their efforts to combat misinformation. It is noteworthy that there does not seem to be a relationship between the presence of a Public Information Officer and the inclusion of news media or paid advertising. South Dakota, for instance, did not report having a Communication Director, and only reported that collaboration with federal and state agencies is part of its misinformation strategy. South Carolina, on the other hand, has a Public Information Officer, yet did not report that news media, paid advertising, or social media are part of its misinformation strategy. Whereas the survey did not include a question about the role of earned media in their misinformation strategies, election officials referenced earned media frequently during our Phase I interviews, and considered earned media a strong indicator of effective communication efforts.

¹⁶ The Election Center: <https://www.electioncenter.org/#:~:text=%23TrustedInfo2022,trusted%20sources%20for%20election%20information>.



Table 3. Misinformation Strategy: Coordination with Agencies & Media

State	Federal & State Agencies	News Media	Paid Advertising	Social Media Campaigns
Arkansas	✓			✓
Arizona	✓	✓	✓	
Colorado	✓	✓	✓	
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓	
Delaware	✓	✓		✓
Hawaii	✓	✓	✓	
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	
Kentucky		✓		✓
Maryland				
Massachusetts		✓	✓	✓
Mississippi	✓	✓		✓
North Carolina	✓	✓		✓
New Jersey	✓	✓		✓
New York	✓	✓		
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	
Pennsylvania	✓			✓
South Carolina	✓			
South Dakota	✓			
Virginia	✓	✓	✓	
Washington	✓	✓	✓	
West Virginia	✓	✓	✓	
Oklahoma		✓		✓

We take these findings with a grain of salt because these state election offices stated that they have a working relationship with state and local news organizations for voter education. In addition, election officials with whom we had in-depth conversations (Phase I) reported using social media to combat misinformation and engaging with the news media. The most prominent example is that of Kentucky; the Secretary of State is highly active on social media, explicitly addressing “falsehoods” – in his terms – and is frequently featured in local and state media. Such discrepancies may reflect differences in capacity, funding, and needs when addressing misinformation.



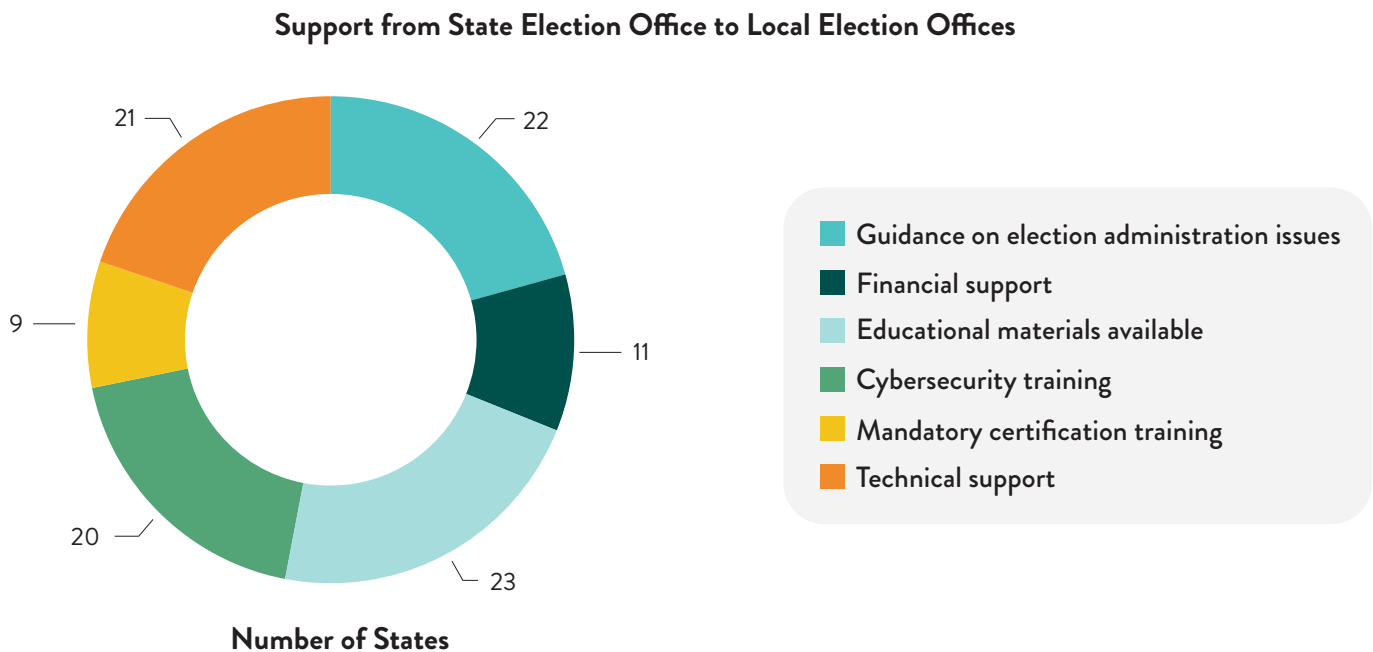
Support and requirements for local election offices

Local election offices take on the biggest bulk of election administration duties, including informing voters about when and how to vote. Although elections are run locally, state election offices also play an important role in overseeing their conduct. We are agnostic as to how exactly state election offices broadly support local election offices, as well as whether there are institutional requirements for local election offices to conduct voter education and outreach.

i. Support for local elections offices

In our survey, we asked election officials to report on the services and resources they provide to local election jurisdictions in their states. As we show in Figure 5, making educational materials available and providing guidance on election administration-related issues are the most common types of support offered by state election offices, followed by cybersecurity training and technical support.

Figure 5. Support to Local Election Offices



About 10 percent of states and U.S. territories in our sample stated that they provide financial support to local election jurisdictions, and a little less than nine percent of them said that they run the mandated certification training for local election officials. We are certain that support to local election offices extends beyond the resources we list here, but these serve as useful examples of systematic patterns across the states with respect to the relationship between state and local election offices.



ii. Requirements for local election offices

In this section, we were also interested in capturing any voter education and outreach activities that local election officials are mandated by state law to conduct. We drew from Florida’s county voter education survey, which to our knowledge is the only one that tracks local-level efforts to educate voters online, on social media, and offline.¹⁷ Among the states that responded that their state mandates that local election offices conduct voter education and outreach (Table 4), the most common activity was voter registration drives, which is an activity not funded by HAVA, but it is included in states’ voter education and outreach efforts. Posting newspaper ads and mailers is mandated in three states that responded to the survey. Only Washington reported that state law requires local election offices to offer all the activities and tools we show in Table 4: voter registration drives, newspaper ads, mailers, local TV/radio ads, and a local election website.

Table 4. Voter Education Activities / Tools Mandated by State Law for Local Election Offices

State	Voter Registration Drives	Newspaper Ads	Mailers	Local TV/ Radio Ads	Local Election Website
Connecticut	✓	✓			
Maryland			✓		
Mississippi	✓				
New Jersey			✓		
New York	✓				
Pennsylvania		✓			
Washington	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
West Virginia	✓				

Research on voter education at the local level shows that election officials are actively involved within their jurisdictions; they conduct voter registration drives, attend community fairs, have a local election website, and are active on social media. In fact, more and more local election officials report that they view voter education as a significant part of their responsibilities.¹⁸ What we capture here is a baseline for state-mandated outreach for local election officials because we currently lack systematic data on these activities both at the state and local levels. We are limited in extrapolating to all states and U.S. territories since not every state and U.S. territory responded to our survey.

¹⁷ Thessalia Merivaki, and Mara Suttmann-Lea. “Can electoral management bodies expand the pool of registered voters? Examining the effects of face-to-face, remote, traditional, and social media outreach.” *Policy Studies* 44, no. 3 (2023): 377-407.

¹⁸ Mara Suttmann-Lea and Thessalia Merivaki. “How Local Election Officials Educate Voters about Voting Requirements and Election Reforms.” *The Frontline of Democracy: How Local Election Administrators Support, Staff, and Defend American Elections.* Palgrave McMillan. Forthcoming.



Funding for voter education

There is general agreement in the election community that elections are under-resourced, highlighting the need for consistent funding streams for the administration of elections. In our conversations with election officials (Phase I), there was a similarly expressed consensus insofar as what item is most likely to be cut when resources are limited, and that is voter education.

i. Budget allocated to voter education and outreach.

In this section, we wanted to capture state capacity in the context of resource allocation, starting with budget allocation on voter education and outreach. Among the states and U.S. territories that responded to this question, 13 (46%) responded that their office has a portion of their budget allocated specifically to voter education and outreach, with the remaining states responding that they do not. Among those in the latter category, seven states stated that the state legislature does not allocate funds for this purpose.

When we followed up with a question on how much exactly state election offices spent on voter education in 2020 and 2022, we got responses from a handful of states in our sample. In Table 5, we report the information provided by nine states and one U.S. territory. Pennsylvania provided the most comprehensive breakdown of funds allocated and spent on voter education and outreach in both 2020 and 2022 by type of funding (federal v. non-federal) and type of election (primary and general). Perhaps not surprisingly, states reported spending more in 2020 than in 2022, which is explained both by the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and the availability of federal funds to assist states with running the 2020 presidential election (CARES Act).

Disclosure of election administration-related expenses at that granular level is a challenge, first because not every state has a dedicated budget item for voter education, as we reported above. In effect, Massachusetts clarified that they operate a generalized election fund, and New York stated that voter education funds are grouped “under non-personal service, a less detailed and specific designation.” Second, not every state has a designated grants compliance officer whose responsibility is to systematically track grant activity and expenditures, meaning that this responsibility is shared among other officials in the state elections office, who may have non-election duties too. Existing work on states’ spending on communications from the CARES Act shows significant variation in how these expenses are tracked and reported, which makes it challenging to compare how states allocate resources for election administration, including voter education.

Although the Elections Security Act was not referenced by any of the states, it is likely that states are referring to it when they report HAVA-related funding. That is because previous HAVA grants have either closed, or states no longer rely on them to support election administration activities. We received an important insight into the usefulness of these grants for designing and implementing voter education and outreach programs during our interview with the former Texas official. Reflecting on the contribution of all HAVA funds on elections, he noted that the availability of HAVA Election Security funds was instrumental in implementing important parts of the state’s trust-building campaign, particularly to communicate that elections are safe and secure.



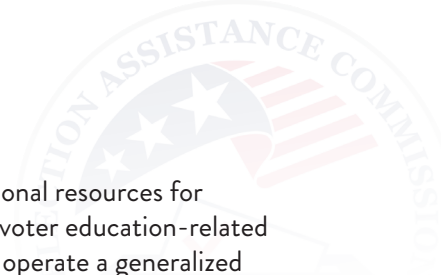
Table 5. State Expenditures in 2020 and 2022 for Voter Education & Outreach

State	Please list what portion (in dollar amounts) of your 2020 election cycle expenditures were allocated to voter education.	Please list what portion (in dollar amounts) of your 2022 election cycle expenditures were allocated to voter education.
Arizona	\$5 million	\$150,000
Colorado	\$3,797,160	\$1,769,510
Connecticut	We received \$2 million in funding for voter education in 2020 (from a combination of CARES/HAVA funding and private funding from CEIR) and 2022 (from the state legislature in the form of ARPA carryforward funds). We did not receive a similar appropriation for 2024. Although we will request an appropriation in the midterm budget adjustment in early 2024, we are planning as if we will not have funding to do a robust voter education campaign in 2024.	
Delaware	\$100,000	15% of budget
Idaho	\$824,525.10 (a lot of this was extraordinary expenses related to the pandemic)	\$264,549.67
Maryland	\$1,750,000	\$500,000
Oregon	\$350,000 on PSA campaign	No Response
Pennsylvania	\$978,966 was spent on outreach for the 2020 primary election using federal grant dollars and \$12,818,552 was spent on outreach for the 2020 General Election using non-federal grant dollars. Total spending in 2020 on outreach was \$13,797,518.	\$150,470 in federal dollars was used for outreach in the 2022 primary election and an additional \$1,089,079 was used in the 2022 general election.
U.S. Territories - U.S. Virgin Islands ¹⁹	\$50,000	\$27,000
Washington	About \$4 million	About \$2 million

ii. Requesting additional resources from the state legislature.

Funds for voter education, as with other election administration related expenses, may come from federal grants and state appropriated funds. In Figure 6, we report the states who disclosed the process their office follows to request additional funds for elections, including voter education, along with their responses to a question about which federal sources they used for voter education in the 2020 and 2022 federal elections. Among the states and U.S. territories that responded to these items, one distinction we can make is between states that seem to be better resourced in terms of having the ability to request additional funds both from the federal government and the state legislature.

¹⁹ Amounts reported in the survey do not match the amounts reported here; we followed up with the Virgin Islands Supervisors of Elections to get an accurate estimate of expenditures on voter education in 2020 and 2022.

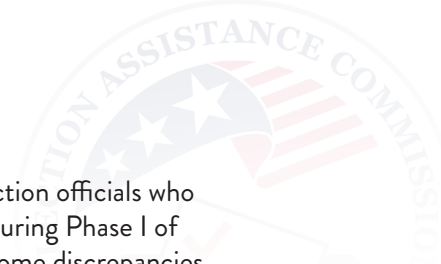


Except for four states in our sample, 21 states reported that when they need additional resources for elections, they submit requests to the state legislature to allocate state funds. For voter education-related needs, some of these states would have to submit a generalized budget, since they operate a generalized budget for election administration. In eight states, the state elections office must submit requests to allocate federal funds. This does not mean of course that these requests will be approved for use. In 2020 for instance, the Arizona state legislature did not appropriate CARES Act funds for the Secretary of State's office. As we show in Figure 6, Arizona reported the use of CARES Act funds in the 2020 Presidential election.²⁰

Figure 6. Process for Requesting Additional Resources from State Legislature.



²⁰ We followed up with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in Arizona, who clarified that despite the fact that the state legislature did not authorize the use of CARES Act, the state submitted a request to have CARES Act funds allocated through the Governor's office, which was approved.



It is important to highlight that the data we report here reflect responses from election officials who responded to our survey, and/or took part in an in-depth interview we conducted during Phase I of this project. When looking at responses to questions about funding, we identified some discrepancies particularly in states who did not report using federal funds in 2020 and/or 2022. Specifically, Maryland, Oklahoma, and Virginia left this item blank in their responses.^{21 22} We attribute these discrepancies to reporting errors, which are not uncommon in survey research. That said, reporting gaps such as these seem to reflect a lack of institutional infrastructure as it relates to tracking this data, as well as responding to requests for information.²³

State and local election offices also relied on non-governmental funds to communicate with the voting public in 2020, which came from the Schwarzenegger Institute at the University of Southern California, the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL), and the Center for Election Innovation and Research (CEIR). CEIR funds were explicitly made available to fund state election offices' voter education efforts. The Schwarzenegger Institute's funds were explicitly designed to support the creation of new polling locations, hire polling place staff and/or offer COVID-19 hazard pay.²⁴ The CTCL funds aimed to provide additional resources to local election officials for any aspect of the election administration process, particularly around COVID-19 security protocols.²⁵

Among the states in our sample, six noted that their office has a history of receiving financial resources for voter education outside of state or federal revenue streams, such as private funding. For the 2020 election, election officials in six states referenced that they received funds from the CEIR Voter Education Grant Program – Arizona, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania.²⁶ North Carolina also reported that local election offices received CTCL grants, and a few received funds from the Schwarzenegger Institute. Pennsylvania also reported using CTCL funds in 2020 in addition to CEIR funds. Arizona explicitly stated that private funds were banned by the state legislature in 2022. Arizona is one of the many states whose state legislatures adopted prohibitions on private funding post-2020.²⁷

²¹ It is possible that the individual who responded to the survey was not aware if federal funds were used for voter education and outreach. The question was: "Please list the most recent federal funding sources your office utilized for the 2020 and 2022 elections for voter education and outreach, if any," with response options "HAVA, CARES Act, Other, please specify." That said, as of September 30, 2021, these states reported to the EAC expenditure rates for the CARES Act funds – 100% for Maryland, 45% for Oklahoma, and 94% in Virginia.

²² U.S. Election Assistance Commission, "EAC 2021 Grant Expenditure Report." Available at: https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/paymentgrants/expenditures/EAC_2021_Grant_Expenditure_Report_FINAL.pdf.

²³ Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Virginia also did not report using HAVA funds in 2022. Unfortunately, we do not have access to expenditure data beyond September 30, 2022, to evaluate whether there is a reporting error, or whether these states indeed did not use any HAVA funds in the 2022 election.

²⁴ Detailed expenditures are not publicly available to determine whether these grants covered outreach efforts to inform voters about the availability of new polling places, or recruitment of poll workers.

²⁵ Christian Grose. "How Private Philanthropy Supercharged the 2020 Election: The Audacious Story of the USC Schwarzenegger Institute and the Center for Tech and Civic Life in Local Election Administration," in Paul Gronke, Christian Grose, David Kimball, Bridgett King, Thessalia Merivaki, and Mara Suttman-Lea eds. *The Frontline of Democracy: How Local Election Administrators Support, Staff, and Defend American Elections.* Palgrave MacMillan. Forthcoming.

²⁶ CEIR Voter Education Grant Program: <https://electioninnovation.org/research/ceir-2020-voter-education-grant-program/>.

²⁷ National Conference of State Legislatures. "Prohibiting Private Funding of Elections." Available at: <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/prohibiting-private-funding-of-elections>.



Voter education program assessments

The administration of elections has become highly reliant on data and extends beyond reporting election night results or voter registration totals. Election data, such as those reported in the Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) and the Election Administration Policy Survey, provide the most foundational information to evaluate state and local election administration performance. In this section, we are interested in capturing the presence of assessment structures that states may be conducting internally to evaluate whether their innovations are effective, but also how to improve their services to voters.

In our survey, we asked state election officials about voter education and outreach program assessment, meaning evaluating their impact and effectiveness. About 50 percent of the states that offered a response to this question (13 states) said that their elections office does voter education program assessments of performance. We followed up with a list of assessments that are most common, based on our interviews with state election officials from Phase I. As we show in Table 5, for these states, voter education program assessment most frequently comes in the form of reports from local election officials to the state elections office (nine states), and/or statewide post-election performance analysis. A few states reported conducting analyses with administrative data and voter satisfaction surveys, with only a few noting that they contract with academics for program evaluation, or that they test the effectiveness and impact of specific programs.

The State of Washington shared a comprehensive elections report that provided an overview of the state's legislative landscape, with detailed information on the state's voter education and outreach activities to language minority voters and people previously convicted of felonies who are not under total confinement, who were eligible to vote in the 2022 election. To our knowledge, this is the most comprehensive overview of a state's voter education and outreach programs.²⁸

²⁸ 2022 Annual Report of Washington State Elections: <https://www.sos.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/2022%20annual%20report.pdf?uid=64ee19e8ab11c,%20https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/data-research/election-data-and-maps/ballot-return-statistics>.



Table 6. Voter Education and Outreach Program Assessments

State	Reports from Local Election Officials	Statewide post-election performance analysis	Analysis with administrative data	Voter Satisfaction Surveys	Contracts with Academics	Program-specific evaluation
Arizona		✓				
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓			
Delaware	✓					
Hawaii				✓		
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	✓		
New Jersey	✓					
New York	✓	✓				
Oregon*						✓
Pennsylvania	✓	✓	✓			
Washington	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
South Carolina	✓	✓		✓		
West Virginia	✓					

*Oregon: PSA program was assessed on reach and engagement; website traffic.

Oregon also provided additional information on the assessment of specific programs, such as their 2022 election PSA program, which was assessed on reach and engagement. The election office also reported that it tracks website traffic. Website traffic was often referenced in our interviews with state election officials, many of whom noted that they consider increased website traffic and increases in followers on social media as evidence that their voter outreach efforts are effective.

Persistent pain points for state election offices

We ended our survey with an open-ended question, encouraging respondents to share anything they would like to discuss as it relates to voter education and outreach. Although we did not get a response from all states and U.S. territories that completed the survey, we received some insightful comments from four states that touch upon the most persistent pain points state and local elections offices are facing: capacity, lack of adequate resources, and dedicated voter education staff.

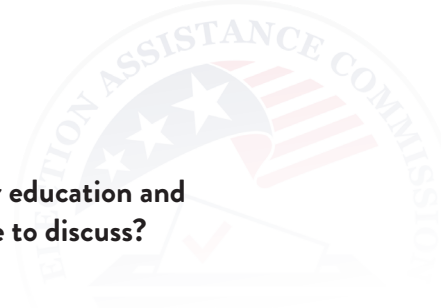
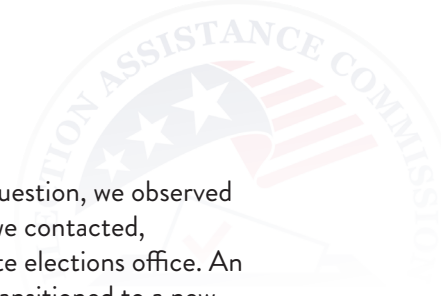


Table 7. We have asked you a number of questions about your office’s voter education and outreach programs. Is there anything you didn’t get to share you would like to discuss?

Idaho	“The administration recently took office in January and the office is working to develop and implement voter outreach for the future.”
Maryland	“Dedicated staff are needed. Voter education, social media, pamphlet development, web development have all become somewhat “add-ons” duties to employee’s primary responsibilities. When staff leave you hope to find another existing staff member that may be able to take on some of the duties. It is often a struggle with the State Budget Departments to gain funding for voter education and can become one of the first items to be cut. The question regarding training staff on media - my answer was yes, but that means to train everyone to send media inquiries to senior management.”
North Dakota	“There wasn’t much voter education coming from this office under the previous administration. However, our current Secretary of State has indicated that voter education is a top priority of this office going into the 2024 election cycle. We are working on developing a plan and voter education tools.”
Oklahoma	“We have a very small staff and few resources to conduct extensive outreach at the state and county level; however, we do our best to accommodate as many requests as possible.”

As we show in Table 7, staff and budgetary needs significantly affect the capacity of states to conduct voter education and outreach. All state election officials we talked to in Phase I echo Maryland’s concern that states are understaffed and work with limited and inconsistent funding. Two states stand out in that regard: Texas and Oregon. During our interview with the former Texas official, we were informed that the Secretary of State’s office launched a trust-building campaign that relied heavily on videos of the Secretary of State explaining election processes. He highlighted that there were not enough resources to produce high quality videos, and he described using his phone to record them. He noted that video editing equipment, and staff support, would make “my job easier as a communicator.”

“In the future, it would make the videos more high-quality, would make, you know, the content hopefully more engaging. But I mean, it was just me and a camera and iMovie on my laptop editing. I’ve got a broadcast journalism background, so I know how to edit this stuff. But it’s a lot, it’s a lot for one person to do. So, any resources to make that process easier would be helpful. And I think we’ve got enough positive feedback from it to show that it works and helps address election skepticism. And, you know, all the other concerns about election integrity that are out there.”



An additional pain point we identified was turnover. Although we did not ask this question, we observed that between January and October 2023, a significant number of officials whom we contacted, interviewed, and received a survey response from, are no longer working in the state elections office. An added challenge we identified was the lack of institutional memory. Many states transitioned to a new Chief Elections Officer and elections staff after the 2022 midterm elections. It became challenging to receive information about voter education and outreach activities from a state with a new election official, even though we fielded the survey in May 2023, about four months into a new state election office administration. At the same time, this challenge created opportunities to capture the intentions of new state elections offices, who expressed strong willingness in building voter education and outreach capacity (see North Dakota and Idaho).

Evolving election information requirements and threats mean that specific gaps in voter education and outreach will continue to change over time. At the same time, balancing the needs of local election offices with the resources, authority, and capacity of state election offices will undoubtedly remain a consistent source of tension in state efforts to fill gaps in voter education needs.



Appendix A

Responded	Did Not Respond
Arizona	Alabama
Arkansas	Alaska
Colorado	California
Connecticut	Florida
Delaware	Georgia
Hawaii	Illinois
Idaho	Indiana
Iowa	Kansas
Kentucky	Louisiana
Maryland	Maine
Massachusetts	Michigan
Mississippi	Minnesota
New Jersey	Missouri
New York	Montana
North Carolina	Nebraska
North Dakota	Nevada
Oklahoma	New Hampshire
Oregon	New Mexico
Pennsylvania	Ohio
South Carolina	Rhode Island
South Dakota	Tennessee
Vermont*	Texas
Virginia	Utah
Washington	Wisconsin
Washington D.C.*	Wyoming
West Virginia	American Samoa
Guam	Puerto Rico
Virgin Islands	

Note: Vermont, and Washington D.C. did not complete the survey.

25 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories responded to the survey. Vermont and D.C. did not complete the survey, but we include them in the list of states that responded because the state election official who initiated the survey provided their contact information.

Appendix B

Survey Questions



Overview of voter education strategy

Does your office have a mission statement and / or strategic plan regarding voter education and outreach?

Yes

No

Unsure

If you answered yes to the previous question, please share the text of, or link to your office's mission statement / strategic plan regarding voter and education below.

Does your office have a designated voter education compliance officer or policy to ensure it is complying with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to voter education and outreach, as well as internal codes of conduct, policies, and procedures?

Yes

No

Unsure

How many persons are employed by your office dedicated to voter education and outreach (including full-time, part-time, seasonal / temporary, and volunteer staff). Please list your response using numeric values, for example: 1, 2, 3.

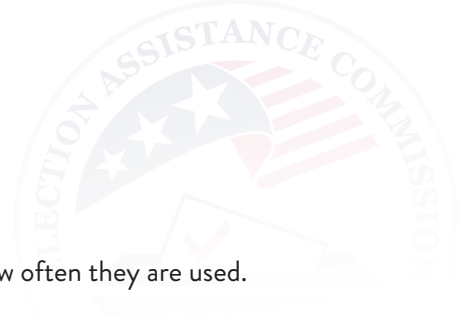
For each of the staff dedicated to voter education and outreach in your office, please list the job title, employment status (full-time, part-time), and responsibilities.

Does your office have a dedicated staff member tasked with writing state, federal, or private grant applications?

Yes

No

Unsure



Voter education programs

Please select any of the programs, activities, or tools utilized by your office and how often they are used.

	Used during federal election cycles	Used during off-year election cycles	Used on an ongoing basis
State election website/page			
E-mail newsletters			
Informational video series			
Fact vs. Fiction content			
Toll-free hotlines			
Town halls (In-person and/or virtual)			
Outreach to K-12 students			
Outreach to High school seniors			
Outreach to College students			
Voter information guides or pamphlets			
Partnerships with community organizations			
Outreach to language minority voters			
Outreach to newly naturalized citizens			
Outreach to voters with disabilities			
Outreach to UOCAVA voters			
Other, please specify			



You indicated your office operates a state election website / page for voter education. Does the office have specific employee(s) dedicated to the management of this website / page?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

You indicated your office produces voter information guides or pamphlets. Does your office produce guides that are mailed to all registered voters, e-mailed to all registered voters, and / or posted on a state election website? Select all that apply.

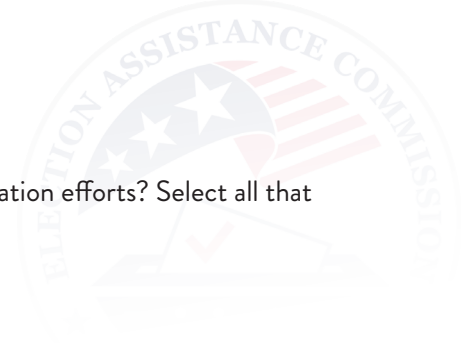
- Guides / pamphlets are e-mailed to all registered voters
- Guides / pamphlets are posted on the state election website
- Guides / pamphlets are mailed to all registered voters
- Other, please specify

What forms of media advertising are currently used in your office for voter education, if any? Select all that apply.

- Television ads
- Newspaper ads
- Radio ads
- Social media ads
- Internet search engine ads
- Organic social media content (posting to Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Other, please specify

You indicated that you use social media for voter education. Which platforms is your office using? Select all that apply.

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- TikTok
- Other, please specify



Does your office coordinate with any of the following types of media outlets in your voter education efforts? Select all that apply.

- Local media
- State media
- National media
- Other, please specify
- Our office does not have a relationship with any media outlets

You indicated your office coordinates with media outlets for voter education. How does your office coordinate with these outlets to get information out to voters? Select all that apply.

- Press releases
- Media invitation to sites for observation of election processes
- Interviews
- Op-eds
- Other, please specify

Do staff in your office receive training on how to work with the media?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Does your office engage with civic groups or other community partners on voter education initiatives?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

You indicated your office engages with civic groups or other community partners on voter education initiatives. Please list up to five (5) groups your office most recently worked with.

Does your office have a mis/disinformation strategy?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure



You indicated your office has a mis/disinformation strategy. What does this strategy involve? Select all that apply.

Paid media advertising campaigns (TV, Radio, Print, Social media)

Coordination with CISA (Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency), Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of State or other state and federal agencies

Coordination with news media

Social media campaigns (e.g. #Trustedinfo)

Other, please specify

You indicated your office has a mis/disinformation strategy. How would you characterize this strategy? Select all that apply.

Mostly proactive (e.g. Pre-bunking dominant mis/disinformation claims from recent election cycles)

Mostly reactive (e.g. Debunking / responding to stories as they emerge)

A mixture of reactive and proactive

Other, please specify

Does your office regularly utilize or collaborate with the following national organizations? Select all that apply.

NASS (National Association of Secretaries of State)

NASED (National Association of State Election Directors)

EI-ISAC (Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing & Analysis Center)

Election Center (The National Association of Election Officials)

Other, please specify

What kind of support does your office offer to local election offices for voter education and outreach? Select all that apply.

We make educational materials available

We provide financial resources

We conduct cybersecurity trainings

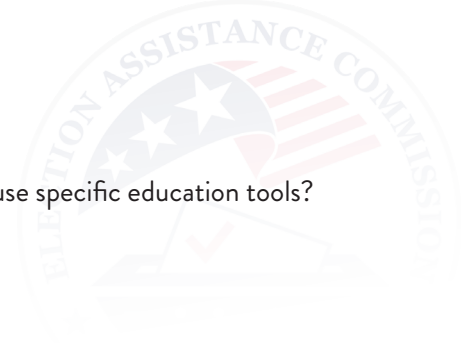
We conduct mandatory certification programs

We provide guidance on election administration-related issues

We offer technical support

Our office does not offer support to local election offices for voter education and outreach

Other, please specify



Does your state mandate by law that local election offices conduct voter education activities / use specific education tools?

Yes

No

Unsure

You indicated your state mandates by law that local election offices conduct specific voter education activities / use specific voter education tools. Which do they mandate? Select all that apply.

Maintenance of a local election website

Maintenance of social media account/s

Local TV or radio ads

Ads in local newspapers

Informational mailers

Voter registration drives

Other, please specify

Financial support / grants / resources

Does your office have a portion of your budget allocated specifically to voter education and outreach?

Yes

No

Unsure

You indicated your office has a portion of your budget allocated specifically to voter education and outreach. How is this budget determined? Select all that apply.

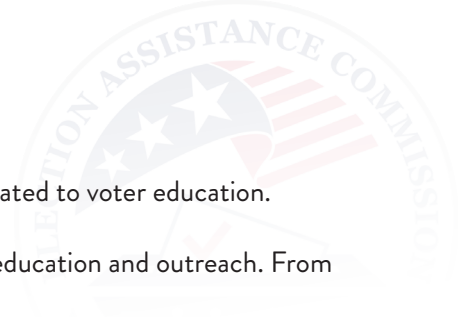
Federal funds

In-office discretionary funds

State legislature

Other, please specify

Please list what portion (in dollar amounts) of your 2020 election cycle expenditures were allocated to voter education.



Please list what portion (in dollar amounts) of your 2022 election cycle expenditures were allocated to voter education.

You indicated your office does not have a portion of your budget allocated specifically to voter education and outreach. From your understanding, why is this the case? Please select all that apply.

We have not sought funds for this purpose

The state legislature does not allocate funds for this purpose

Other, please specify

Does your office have a process for requesting additional resources from your state?

Yes

No

Unsure

You indicated your office has a process for requesting additional resources from your state. To the best of your knowledge, what does that process look like? Select all that apply.

Requests to the state legislature to approve use of private funds

Requests to the state legislature to appropriate state funds

Requests to the state legislature to allocate discretionary funds

Requests to the state legislature to appropriate federal funds

Other, please specify

Please list the most recent federal funding sources your office utilized for the 2020 and 2022 elections for voter education and outreach, if any. Select all that apply.

HAVA (Help America Vote Act)

CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act)

Other federal grant, please specify

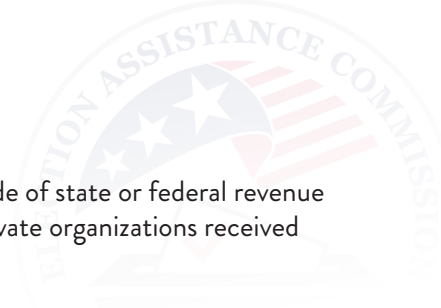
Our office did not use federal funding sources during these election cycles

Does your office have a history of receiving financial resources for voter education outside of state or federal revenue streams?

Yes

No

Unsure



You indicated your office has a history of receiving financial resources for voter education outside of state or federal revenue streams. Please list examples of the resources received, including any grant funding through private organizations received during the 2020 and 2022 election cycles

Does your office have regular, direct contact with any of the following federal agencies? Select all that apply

U.S EAC (Election Assistance Commission)

FVAP (Federal Voting Assistance Program)

DOJ (Department of Justice)

Other, please specify

Assessment

Does your office do any assessment of your voter education and outreach programs? By assessment we mean evaluations of their impacts and effectiveness.

Yes

No

Unsure

You indicated your office does an assessment of your voter education and outreach programs. What does this assessment look like? Select all that apply.

Voter satisfaction surveys

Reports from local election officials

Statewide post-election performance analysis

Contracts with academics (either pre- or post-election)

Analysis with administrative data (e.g. wait times, mail ballot rejections, provisional ballots cast)

Other, please specify



Appendix C

Post-Survey Interviews

At the end of the survey, we included a question asking the state election official, or whoever completed the survey, whether they would be interested in a follow-up interview. We were intentional in our follow-up requests and asked to interview states where we identified discrepancies in the responses given in the survey. In our follow-up interviews, we asked clarification questions on specific survey items, and updated the relevant information but retained their original response. We produced state-by-state survey response documents to track any clarification that we documented from this process, either through a formal follow-up interview, or a follow-up phone call or email.

Phase II: Follow-Up Interviews

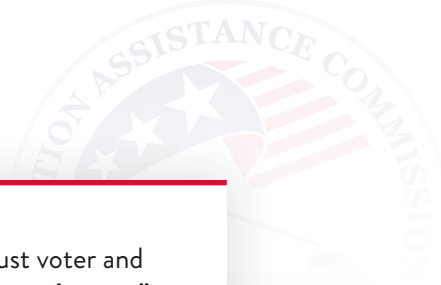
- Delaware - June 5, 2023
- Oregon, June 20, 2023
- Arizona, October 20, 2023
- Iowa, November 14, 2023
- Virgin Islands, November 14, 2023 – email exchange.

Appendix D

Voter Education Mission/Strategic Plan

Hawaii: “Our office’s mission is to provide secure, accessible, and convenient election services to all citizens statewide.”

New York: “The State Board of Elections was established in the Executive Department June 1, 1974, as a bipartisan agency vested with the responsibility for administration and enforcement of all laws relating to elections in New York State. The Board is also responsible for regulating disclosure and limitations of a Fair Campaign Code intended to govern campaign practices. In conducting these wide-ranging responsibilities, the Board offers assistance to local election boards and investigates complaints of possible statutory violations. In addition to the regulatory and enforcement responsibilities the board is charged with the preservation of citizen confidence in the democratic process and enhancement in voter participation in elections. The State Board of Elections is also committed to providing accessible information to individuals with disabilities, including voters, members of the public, candidates, media and treasurers.”



North Carolina: “Our mission statement and strategic plan are broader than just voter and outreach education: <https://www.osbm.nc.gov/strategic-plan-sbe/download?attachment>.”

“Through innovation, professionalism, teamwork, and voter-centered services, the State Board of Elections will become a national leader in elections administration and campaign finance regulations. Approaching work with a commitment to this vision while upholding the collaboratively established values, the State Board of Elections aims to achieve the following goals identified in the FY2023-2025 Strategic Plan:

- Create and maintain a comprehensive secure environment for North Carolina elections.
- Be good stewards of election resources.
- Institute and establish practices that prioritize statewide uniformity in elections administration to ensure lawful, accurate elections that promote public confidence in the process.
- Provide excellent customer service in all agency efforts.
- Foster an empowering collaborative, and professional work environment.”

Oregon: “Build trust between the people of Oregon and our state government so that public services can make a positive impact in peoples’ lives. Vision: We envision an Oregon without barriers, where we lead with our values and believe every voice should be heard. We do so by:

- Building equitable access to our democracy.
- Making tools easily available to achieve economic success.
- Ensuring state resources are used sustainably, efficiently and accountable to the public.
- Honestly acknowledging Oregon’s history.”

Virginia:

Mission: The Department of Elections (ELECT) “promoted and supports secure, accurate, fair and open elections for the citizens of the Commonwealth.”

Vision: “ELECT envisions a highly modern, efficient and professional electoral process that is secure, trustworthy and uniform at all levels and engages the diverse citizenry of Virginia in exercising their right to vote.”

Washington: “Our mission is to ensure accessible, fair and accurate elections. Through educational programs and materials, we help all eligible Washington residents register to vote and cast an informed ballot.”

