



Preparedness for the 2016 Presidential General Election

State Board of Elections

August 2, 2016

What should be the goals of election administrators?

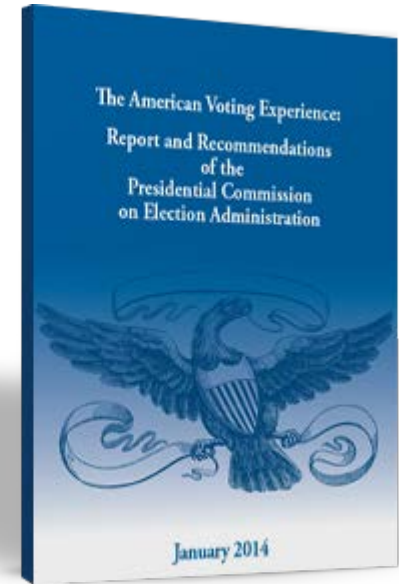
Goals for the 2016 Presidential Election

- Ensuring that all voters choosing to participate receive the highest degree of customer service, through:
 - Expediency and accuracy when processing voters at check-in stations, privacy booths and ballot scanners.
 - Avoiding predictable delays and obstacles which could have an adverse effect on voter confidence in the election itself and future turnout.

Presidential Commission on Election Administration

➤ From the PCEA's report issued in January of 2014:

Every election official who is responsible for allocating a jurisdiction's limited voting resources (ballots, voting booths, voting machines, voter check-in tables, poll books, qualified election workers, etc.) to polling locations must be able to predict how many voters will show up and how long they will take to vote. This knowledge is required to allocate voting resources efficiently to polling locations and to determine prior to the election if sufficient resources are available.

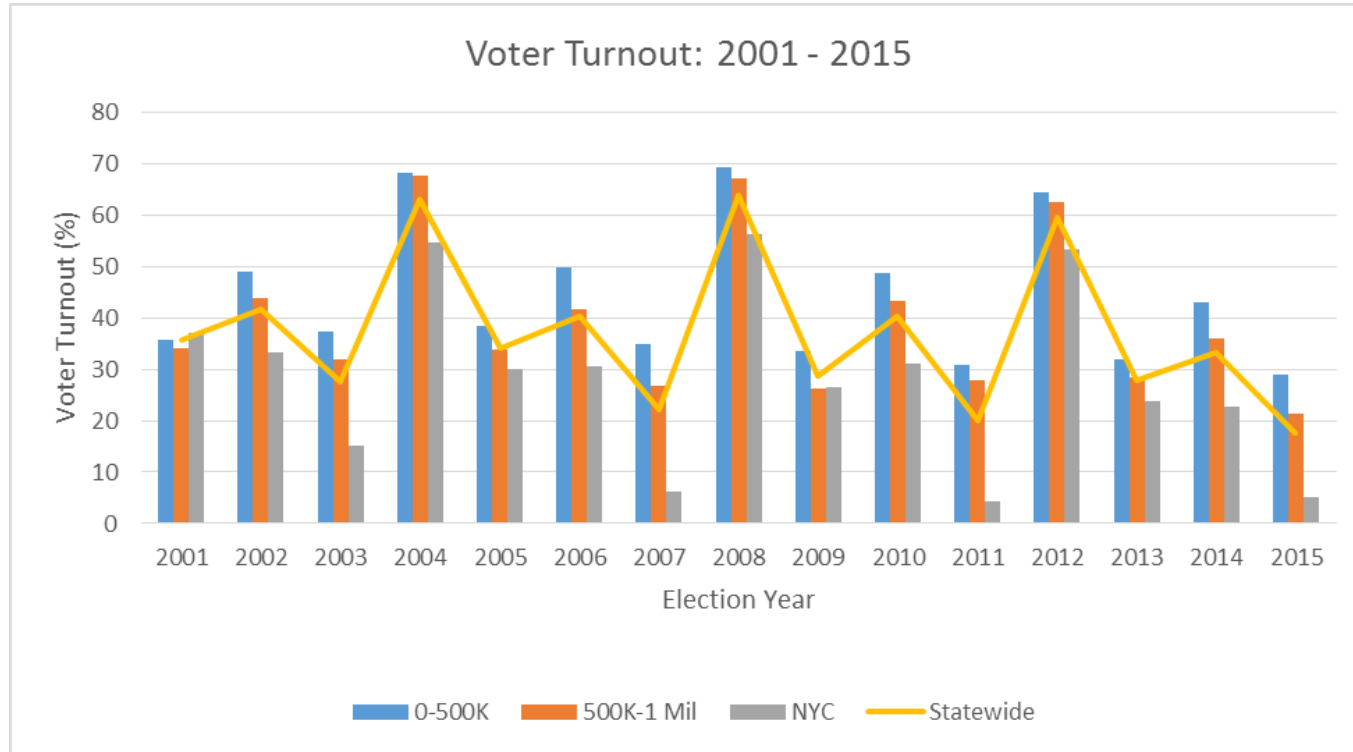


Evaluating Turnout

Evaluating Turnout

- When considering turnout, it is important to note that a dramatic swing in the number of voters that show up at the polls can be observed from year to year.
- In the following chart, the most recent presidential election year (2012) had more than three times the turnout than the year immediately prior, when more local races were on the ballot (2011).

Evaluating Turnout



Evaluating Turnout

- Such a dramatic difference in the expected number of people showing up at the polls on Election Day obviously requires an appropriate increase in resources to serve those additional voters.

Optimizing a Voter's Poll Site Experience

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- Every poll site is unique with regard to its capacity, path of travel and other logistical factors. A well-managed polling place can be the most important factor contributing to the quality of the voter experience.
- County boards need to develop a plan for each poll site with regard to the proper amount of equipment and workers to be allocated to each poll site, along with the optimal organization of both within each location.

Optimizing a Voter's Poll Site Experience

- Poll sites should be organized to reflect the streamlining afforded by casting any ballot on any scanner.
- The voter sign-in processes in a poll site should be by accomplished in well-segmented poll books in alphabetical order, so as to best manage voter traffic and in doing so eliminating, or at least diminishing, any potential for lines.

Optimizing a Voter's Poll Site Experience

- Once checked-in, voters should be directed to well-positioned privacy booths or ballot marking devices so that ballots can be marked with as much privacy as the poll site allows.
- Voters should then progress, via clear and unobstructed paths of travel, to any available scanner, where trained poll workers are positioned in such a way as to maintain the voter's privacy but can easily assist any voter when asked to do so.

Best Practices for Poll Site Staffing

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- Poll worker recruitment should be widely pursued through diverse outreach efforts including civic or service organizations, Participation in Government classes in the State's high schools and in the school newspapers of community colleges and other similar outlets.
- Expanding the recruitment process will result in the acquisition of poll workers with a variety of new skills and perspectives, and will also help encourage a sense of civic duty.
- Have a ready supply of trained stand-by inspectors to fill vacancies from no-show workers.

Best Practices for Poll Site Staffing

- Boards should analyze the hourly primary and general election voter turn-out data the State Board has been recommending be collected from local, statewide and presidential election cycles.
- Doing so would allow Boards to determine how best to staff poll sites during peak periods, helping to eliminate lines and other delays and generally improve the delivery of all Election Day services to voters.

Best Practices for Poll Site Staffing

- Effective poll worker training is essential. Boards should consider engaging the services of professional trainers with experience in training the adult learner.
- The State Board's training curriculum does lend itself to role-playing and hands-on training opportunities which should be included in any effective training session.
- Doing so will help ensure that all official election documents are properly completed and the highest degree of election services are delivered.

Voter Outreach

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- Consider posting sample ballots on the Internet prior to Election Day, so voters can become familiar with candidates, ballot questions, and the ballot layout in general. Also make available poll site information and other pertinent data in a manner that is accessible over a wide variety of technologies and devices.
- Be sure to provide the New York State Board of Elections with updated poll site information for its online lookup tool, especially any last minute changes.

Emergency Preparedness

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- New York has had the misfortune to experience a number of events which have impacted the ability of its residents to participate in the electoral process. From terrorist attacks to extreme weather emergencies, steps should be taken to ensure affected voters maintain their ability to exercise their right to vote.
- Most boards have emergency plans in place, and are now better able to respond to the impact of a scenario that disrupts the election process. Please set a goal to have contingency plans completed or updated in time for the general election.

Questions?