



The League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

JOINT LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC HEARING ON 2020-2021 EXECUTIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL PUBLIC PROTECTION

TESTIMONY TO THE JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEES OF THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE AND NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY *February 12th, 2020* *Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, Albany, New York*

Introduction

In 2019, for the first time ever, New York State voters had the opportunity to vote early for 9 days leading up to Election Day. The League of Women Voters conducted a survey of voters who took the opportunity to vote early and found that overwhelmingly voters had a positive experience voting early. More than 93% said they plan to vote early again, with an additional 3% stating they would consider voting early in the future if more sites were made available. A full copy of our survey report is included as an attachment to our testimony.

Although we are thrilled to see voters reporting such positive experiences, we are deeply concerned that county boards of elections will be unable to accommodate New York's three periods of early voting in 2020 without a serious investment from the state.

The Governor has proposed \$10 million in Aid to Localities to help cover the costs of early voting in 2020. He has also proposed \$15 million in Capital Projects for the purchase of new elections equipment, and \$16 million for the creation of an online voter registration portal. We applaud the Governor for making these proposed investments but urge the legislature to consider increasing this funding.

Over the last several months, the League has been speaking with county commissioners to uncover challenges they faced in 2019. These challenges will be further amplified in 2020 as counties prepare for 30 days of voting. In our testimony we have highlighted some of the major cost drivers that counties will have to face in 2020 including finding new site locations, addressing power inadequacies, purchasing new equipment, hiring new staff, and preparing for the increase in voter turnout.

The Board of Elections has seen an increase in operational mandates since the passage of several progressive voting reforms in 2019. The Board of Elections typically receives flat funding from the state but in more recent years has seen steep budget cuts. It was recently reported that the board had to use funds designated for cyber security to cover the costs of their everyday operations in 2019. Although demands on the agency have greatly increased, their budget has remained stagnant.

Online voter registration, automatic registration transfer, and pre-registration of 16 and 17-year olds all carry some implementation cost. We urge the legislature to consider these costs when negotiating funding for Boards of Elections in 2020-2021.

The Cost of Early Voting in 2020

In conversations with county boards of elections and the State Boards of Elections about early voting spending in 2019, we estimate the overall cost for early voting to double, if not triple, in 2020. We anticipate the State Board of Elections will provide exact cost estimates to the Joint Committee on Public Protection, but we would like to highlight some of the costs that may arise in 2020 due to the increased number of days of voting and challenges counties faced in organizing their first period of early voting.

Location

Although counties tried to use public sites and utilize free spaces, a large majority of counties have been told by these public facilities that they do not wish to serve as poll sites in 2020. Some sites raised concerns around security issues, while other sites said they felt that having their space taken up by voting equipment, staff, and voters for 9 days was far too onerous. County Commissioners have already asked for guidance from the State Board for procuring site locations in 2020.

The legislature has also proposed several reforms to the selection of site locations that may force some counties to open more locations that they had in 2019. This will again increase costs not only for site rental and overhead, but also for staff and additional equipment.

Electrical Power

In addition to location issues, electrical power capabilities were an issue for many counties. Counties who were able to purchase new voting equipment found that many public sites did not have adequate power capabilities. In several counties, commissioners had to bring in generators to power equipment. Renting these generators and paying for gasoline each day of early voting was a huge cost for counties. The New York City Board of Elections reported paying as much as \$147,000 for the use of generators and fuel at poll sites. Changing poll site locations to larger, private spaces may address the need for additional power sources, but this could cause an additional overhead cost.

Equipment

In 2019 only 52 of New York's 62 counties purchased electronic poll books. On Election Day, 34 of these counties continued to use electronic poll books while the remaining 27 reverted back to using paper poll books, with one county using a hybrid of both. These counties used several different tactics to update their poll books on the Sunday and Monday before Election Day to ensure voters who had already voted early would not be on the voter rolls. Some printed poll books at their offices, others had the books printed before the early voting period and had staff update them using a stamp. Regardless of the method, using both electronic and paper poll books was difficult and costly for counties. Many of these counties have said they hope to have electronic poll books for their entire county in 2020. The 10 counties who did not purchase electronic poll books have also said they are interested in purchasing the equipment.

Staff

With 30 days of voting in 2020, the cost of staff will undoubtedly increase for all counties in New York. Counties will be better able to make predictions about the need for staff during the 2020 early voting periods and adjust for time frames when they expect lower turnout but counties will still have to consider the three periods of voting when hiring their poll workers.

2020 Voter Turnout

With a major election taking place in November, the number of voters voting early is expected to far exceed the totals seen in 2019. In 2019, roughly 9% of New York's 3 million voters voted early. In 2020, the Board of Elections is expecting a record turnout of 8 million voters. If only 10% of these voters choose to vote early, close to one million voters will turn out to one of New York's 248 early voting poll sites. Having such an incredible turnout would be a major achievement for New York State which typically sees low voter engagement, but without proper funding, counties will be ill prepared to accommodate this upsurge

in voters.

Funding for the State Board of Elections

The New York State Legislature should be proud of the progressive slate of voting reforms that has been passed over the last year. In time, these new operational and procedural changes will increase voter turnout and overall voter satisfaction. However, the agency charged with implementing these policies, the State Board of Elections (BOE), has seen repeated cuts to its already constricted budget and has little to no funding to execute these policy changes.

The Governor has sought to address one of these deficits by proposing \$16 million for the creation of an online voter registration portal. The portal had been stalled after the agency reported halting the project due to insufficient funds. The Board of Elections has already spent \$400,000 on the project and the \$16 million will help complete the program and bring it online. Although the Governor's investment in the project is thoughtful, there are many other new programs that will need increased or new capital.

The State Senate has already passed a bill to allow for automatic voter registration and we expect that the Assembly will also pass this bill before the end of the legislative session. The program will not be enacted until two years after it is signed into law, but the agencies charged with implementing the policy will need time to adjust their processes and create the electronic registration transmittal system.

According to a report by Common Cause of Massachusetts, the cost of implementing automatic voter registration was roughly \$500,000 in both Vermont and Oregon.¹ It is important to note that both states only conduct automatic voter registration through their state DMV and both states have significantly less eligible voters than New York. Vermont boasts roughly 500,000 eligible voters and Oregon 3 million versus New York's 13 million eligible voters.² New York's automatic voter registration implementation costs will likely far exceed those of Vermont and Oregon.

Conclusion

Although we anticipate long term costs savings from the new voting reforms passed in 2019 and expected to pass in 2020, in the immediate future these policies need seed funding. Over time an online registration portal, automatic registration system, and new modern election equipment will both improve voter's experiences and reduce long term costs on postage, paper, and processing, but these programs and initiatives cost money to implement.

The Board of Elections has historically been an underfunded and understaffed agency and we cannot expect this body to continue to operate on a shoestring budget with constant funding cuts while we simultaneously increase their responsibilities and operational demands. If the legislature does continue to pass voting reforms such as automatic voter registration and same day voter registration, these will need another investment to be implemented.

The State Board of Elections and county boards of elections need a serious funding commitment to realize the goals of the legislative leaders and Governor. We urge the legislature to consider the importance of voting when drafting their budget revisions, and to ensure that their progressive elections reforms are not unfunded mandates.

¹ "The Minimal Costs of Automatic Voter Registration Implementation" Common Cause of Massachusetts. <https://www.commoncause.org/massachusetts/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2018/05/AVR-Cost-Report-May-2018.pdf>

² "2018 November General Election Turnout Rates" Updated December 14th, 2018. <http://www.electproject.org/2018g>



2019 EARLY VOTING SURVEY REPORT

November 20, 2019

Preface

In 2019, for the first time ever, New York State voters had the opportunity to cast their ballots in person ahead of Election Day. The League of Women Voters was actively involved in advocating for the passage and implementation of this reform. Over the past six months, the League has been dedicated to ensuring voters knew about the new early voting policy and how they could vote early in New York State.

The League created early voting educational materials including a brochure translated into five languages and individual leaflets with early voting poll site locations, hours, transportation options, and handicap accessibility for all 62 counties. The League sent over 200,000 brochures and poll site informational leaflets to every county in New York State. The League's 48 local chapters distributed these materials at voter registration drives, community events, and League sponsored debates throughout the state. The League sent additional materials to 25 rural counties' libraries, town halls, universities, and community centers to provide additional early voting education in hard to reach areas. The League also maintained an early voting informational website with poll site information for all early voting sites in New York.

During the early voting period, the League conducted a statewide survey to find out about New Yorkers' experiences voting early for the first time. In total, the League received 1,791 survey responses from voters residing in 54 counties across the state. In addition to our survey, the League received dozens of emails and phone calls from voters and League members reporting issues about their early voting and Election Day voting experiences.

This report was written by Jennifer Wilson, Deputy Director of LWVNYS, with editing and assistance from Suzanne Stassevitch, LWVNYS President; Judie Gorenstein, LWVNYS Vice President of Voter Services; Sally Robinson, LWVNYS Vice President of Issues and Advocacy; Kate Doran, LWVNYS Election Specialist; Jane Colvin, LWVNYS Board Member; and Laura Ladd Bierman, LWVNYS Executive Director. League interns, Sarah Bracken, Leila Eliot, and Shannon Tacy provided hours of support on the entire project, communicating with county Boards of Elections, verifying poll sites, and collating data. A huge thanks also to our local Leagues and members from across the state who met with the county Boards of Elections, verified and reverified poll site locations, distributed the materials, and shared the survey link with so many people – we couldn't have done this all without their help. The entire project was made possible in part by the League of Women Voters Education Fund.



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Executive Summary

During New York State's first ever early voting election period, the League of Women Voters of New York State conducted a survey to study voters' experiences voting early. Over a two-week period, **the League collected 1,791 survey responses from voters residing in 54 counties** throughout New York State. **Survey responses were overwhelmingly positive.**

- More than **93% of voters stated that they would vote early again**, 3% responded that they would consider voting early again, and only 1% stated that they would not vote early again.
- **96% of voters said they found information about early voting easily** with most respondents (26%) stating that they **found information about early voting from print media or by word of mouth** (20%).
- **89% of voters waited only 0 to 5 minutes to vote early**, 10% waited between 5 and 15 minutes, and only 1% waited 15 minutes or more.
- **Most counties utilized new voting equipment** (electronic poll books and/or ballot on demand printers). Four counties did not use this new technology. **Voters appreciated the modernized equipment** and found that **problems with the electronic poll books and ballot on demand printers were resolved relatively quickly.**
- **60%** of voters voted early because they **wanted to try early voting**, **28%** said early voting **worked better for their schedule**, and **13%** of respondents said they would have been **unable to vote on Election Day.**

Only 11% of voters replied to the League's survey **with complaints or concerns** about their early voting experience. These responses can be categorized into the following:

- **ID Questions:** One of the most alarming complaints listed in our survey were instances of poll workers asking voters for their ID at the poll site. In five counties, poll workers asked voters to show their state ID at the check in table. The League believes this was done to expedite the check in process because of the new scan function on some electronic poll book models.
- **Problem with Poll Workers:** Voters said that poll workers were overall friendly and enthusiastic during the early voting period. Unfortunately, many voters commented that poll workers did not appear to be adequately trained on the new equipment. Voters also commented that there were frequently too many poll workers working at poll sites.
- **Equipment Issues:** Although issues with new voting equipment were resolved quickly, voters mentioned similar breakdown issues happening throughout the state. Ballot on demand printers malfunctioned more frequently than electronic poll books and took longer to repair. Some issues were simple such as a paper jam, others, such as network issues, were difficult for poll workers to resolve. Voters also struggled to sign in on the electronic poll pads. Several voters had their ballots challenged because their electronic signature did not match their "wet" signature.
- **Problem with Poll Site:** Poll sites throughout the state varied greatly with many county boards making use of public buildings including town halls, libraries, and schools. Counties also made use of commercial spaces including malls and shopping centers. Some voters stated the rooms in the buildings used as poll sites were too small to accommodate voters. Poll workers also mentioned issues with electricity and power. Some sites did not have enough outlets and power to accommodate the new voting equipment.
- **Location Issues:** Besides poll site rooms being small, voters also found poll site locations to be too far from most voters' residences. Some voters had to drive an hour or more to get to their assigned poll site. Even voters in New York City said that they would have had to travel 45 minutes or more to reach their poll site.

- **Lack of Public Transit:** 47% of voters said that their poll site was accessible by public transit, but even poll sites located on or near a transit line were not always easily reached by bus or train. Voters in eight counties reported inadequate public transit to their poll sites.
- **Lack of Parking:** Voters that drove to their poll sites said that parking was sometimes a challenge. In six counties voters stated that parking was not easily available and in two counties handicap parking was an even bigger challenge with few or no handicap spaces available.
- **Lack of Signage:** Voters reported issues finding their early voting poll sites due to insufficient signage around or near their early voting locations. Voters in 11 counties said they had issues finding their early voting poll site due to a lack of signage.
- **Need for Outreach:** Only 84 participants, approximately 5%, said they found information about early voting from their county board of elections. The League received additional comments from voters about inadequate communications from county boards in eight counties.

Based upon these complaints, **the League recommends the following solutions:**

- **Adjusting Site Locations:** The League recommends that all county boards of elections consider our surveyed voters' comments and adjust their poll site locations to accommodate voters from across their counties. Poll sites that did not have public transportation or parking access should be moved to address those inadequacies. The 34 counties that hosted a single early voting poll site should consider expanding to more than one polling location. County boards should also consider room size and electrical power capabilities when selecting additional or new poll site locations.
- **Increasing Poll worker Training:** Poll workers need more extensive training on the new electronic poll book and ballot on demand equipment. The League would also encourage county boards to conduct their training sessions closer the early voting period. Counties should focus training on trouble shooting the ballot on demand printers and electronic poll books. Counties must conduct addition training for poll workers to inform them of New York State's voter ID laws.
- **Addressing Equipment Issues:** Boards of elections should require tracking and documentation of all procedures from the testing of machines to the handling of ballots. The League recommends conducting uniform, public testing of voting systems to maintain transparency and ensure public trust in those who have questioned the new technology. Boards should restrict physical access to all components of voting system and educate voters on the use of all voting equipment both in advance of the election and at the polling place. Poll workers should receive more extensive training on the machines and be provided with a back-up plan in the event of machine failure. Boards should design a routine process that checks for problems that may have occurred but have not been visible during the early voting period or on Election Day. The League also strongly urges that all electronic poll book ID scanners be disabled, and voters and poll workers be educated on why IDs should not be requested at a poll site.
- **Expanding Board of Elections Outreach:** Boards of elections need to make a more concerted effort to inform voters ahead of the early voting period. Boards of elections should consider using email outreach in addition to mail correspondence. Boards of elections should prioritize early voting materials on their websites and ensure that they are easy to find. Counties should also work with local news outlets to publicize site locations in the week leading up to the early voting period and during the early voting period. The state board should mandate that counties select their early voting poll locations far enough in advance that both the media and election advocates sharing poll site locations, have enough time to create materials to publicize site locations and hours.

Introduction

In 2019, for the first time ever, New York State voters had the opportunity to cast their ballots in person ahead of Election Day. From October 26th to November 7th, the League of Women Voters solicited responses to a survey regarding voter’s experiences voting early for the first time in New York State.

The League received **1,791 survey responses, representing voters from 54 counties voting at 239 different early voting poll sites**. In addition to our survey, the League received dozens of emails and phone calls from voters and League members reporting issues about their early voting and Election Day voting experiences. This report summarizes the results of our survey and makes recommendations on how to improve early voting procedures.

Survey Responses Collected: 1,791

Counties Included:

New York City Bronx Kings New York Queens Richmond	Long Island Nassau Suffolk	Hudson Valley Columbia Dutchess Putnam Rockland Westchester	Catskill Orange Ulster Schoharie Sullivan	Capital Region Albany Montgomery Rensselaer Saratoga Schenectady Washington
Central New York Herkimer Oneida Onondaga Oswego	Northern New York Clinton Essex Fulton Hamilton Franklin St Lawrence Warren	Southern Tier Broome Chemung Cortland Delaware Madison Otsego Tompkins	Finger Lakes Cayuga Livingston Monroe Ontario Schuyler Seneca Steuben Wayne	Western New York Allegany Cattaraugus Chautauqua Erie Genessee Niagara

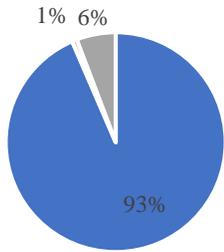
Counties Not Included: Chenango, Greene, Jefferson, Lewis, Orleans, Tioga, Wyoming, Yates

Poll Sites Listed: 239 of 250

It cannot be overstated how overwhelmingly positive the overall response was from voters who took the opportunity to vote early. Of the voters surveyed, 60% said they voted early because they wanted to try the new procedure, 28% said it worked better for their schedules, and 13% said they would not have been able to vote on Election Day. 226 voters listed specific reasons for choosing to vote early, these responses included:

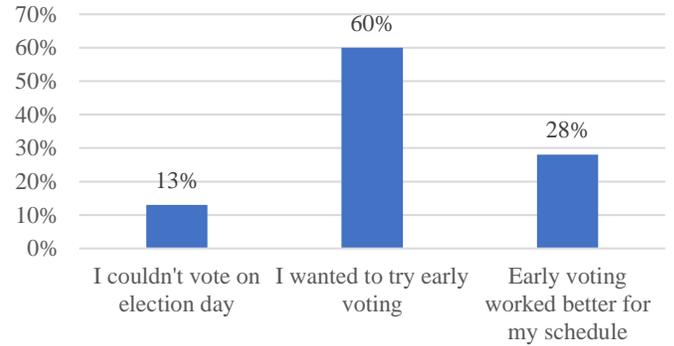
- 11 voters who would be out of town on Election Day;
- 5 voters who wanted to avoid long lines;
- 24 election inspectors who would be working on Election Day;
- 9 voters with disabilities who had limitations getting to the polls on Election Day;
- 2 college students who had classes on Election Day; and
- 1 voter who was pregnant and expecting to deliver on or around Election Day.

Would you vote early again?
(Statewide)



■ Yes ■ No ■ Maybe

Why did you choose to vote early?
(Statewide)



More than 90% of voters said they would vote early again. However, despite these glowing reviews, there were several common issues highlighted by voters around the state. **Based on these comments, the League has identified the following areas that must be improved upon ahead of the 2020 elections.**

Report Findings

I. Poll Site Accessibility

a. Location

A small number of survey responders did not vote early. These voters indicated a lack of poll site access as their main barrier to early voting. In upstate, 34 counties had a single early voting poll site. The League received significantly less feedback from these counties likely due to lower rates of early voting participation because of less poll site access. Voters in Broome, Chemung, Fulton, Rensselaer, Livingston, St. Lawrence, Sullivan, Saratoga, Ulster, Oneida, Onondaga, Orange, Otsego, Genessee, and Dutchess, all cited poll site location as a major barrier to early voting. Voters with a single early voting site reported having to drive an hour or more to get to their designated poll location. Larger downstate counties also complained of a lack of poll sites near their residences. Voters in Bronx, New York, Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester county all stated that their poll site options were too far from their residences.

In eight counties, boards of elections assigned voters to designated poll site locations. Albany, Orange, Westchester, and New York City voters found the assignment method confusing and several voters initially went to an incorrect poll site before figuring out their actual poll location. Voters were especially angry after discovering their early voting poll sites had electronic poll books and possibly could have been voting centers. Although these voters still said they had a positive early voting experience overall, they said being able to vote at any site would be a great improvement.

Poll site locations varied throughout the state with many county boards of elections making use of public spaces such as libraries, town halls, schools, fire stations, community rooms, and churches. Many of these spaces worked well for voters, especially when the locations were close to populated residential and commercial areas where the majority of voters lived and worked. Unfortunately, some of these spaces were confined and voters noted that the small voting space was difficult to navigate. At a Nassau county poll site, a voter saw other voters leave the site before voting because the crowd was so large in the small space. In Westchester, Saratoga, and Monroe, voters worried that the space was so small it compromised the privacy of their voting experience.

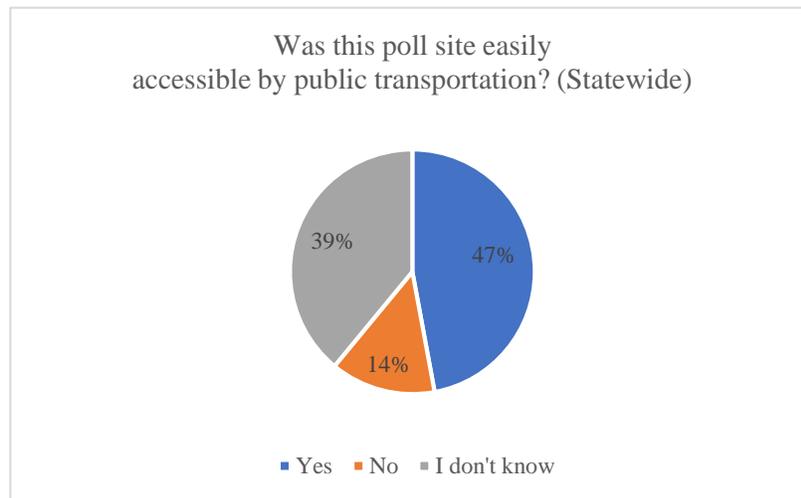
Voters also acknowledged power issues at their poll locations. In New York City voters said that electronic poll books at some sites were not charged before the start of each early voting day causing poll workers to rotate machines so that each poll pad had a chance to charge. In some rooms there were not enough electrical outlets to plug in all the new voting equipment. In Livingston county, power was such an issue that the Town Hall had to run an additional gas generator to power their voting machines.

County boards also chose to designate poll sites in commercial spaces such as malls and shopping centers. In some cases, these locations worked better for visibility, but surveyed voters found the mall locations confusing and inconvenient. Voters said that signage for these sites were hard to find and that candidates were unsure of where they could place campaign materials to abide by electioneering regulations. Although these commercial areas used to be heavily trafficked by shoppers, voters felt these sites were not as easy to navigate as town halls or community centers. Parking accessibility varied, and voters said the malls needed more signage to direct voters to the poll location.

b. Public Transportation and Parking

For both upstate and downstate voters, transportation to their poll site was an issue. Voters who had the opportunity to drive to their poll sites did not always have a free or safe parking option. In Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester, the issue was particularly prevalent. Many Long Island voters complained of

parking only being available in high traffic areas that were dangerous to cross. In Westchester, voters said paid parking was their only option. In Albany and Suffolk voters also complained of a lack of handicap parking options.



Public transit was an even bigger issue throughout the state. In Bronx county, some voters had to travel more than an hour by bus to vote at their designated poll location. Other Bronx voters walked more than a mile to reach their poll sites. Dutchess, Fulton, Putnam, Saratoga, Rensselaer, Monroe, and Ulster county voters stated that their early voting poll sites lacked public transportation options.

Statewide, 14% of voters surveyed said their poll site was not accessible by public transit. In Long Island, that number increased to 30%, in the Capital Region, 22% of voters said their sites were not accessible by public transit, and in Northern New York, 21% said public transit options were not available. In all regions except New York City, nearly half or more of the voters surveyed were unsure if their poll sites were located near or on a public transit line. It's reasonable to assume that the percentage of poll sites that did not have viable public transportation was much higher than what the survey determined because so many voters were unsure if public transit was available.

The New York State League conducted research into public transit options for poll sites ahead of the early voting period. The League found that 163 of the state's 250 poll sites had public transit options, approximately 65%. This estimation does not consider a resident's access to a given bus or train line. Although these sites may have had a nearby transit option, voters across the county did not have equitable access to that public transit line.

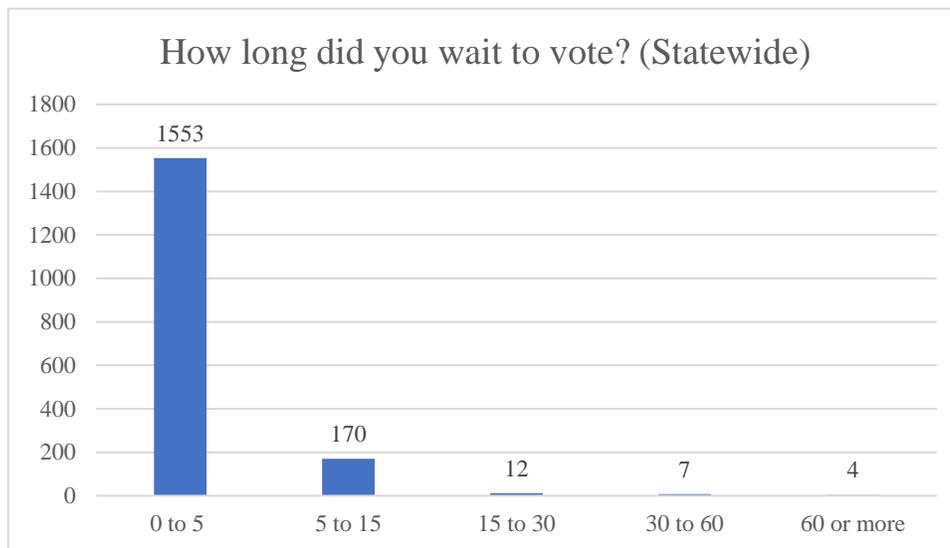
The public transportation problem was most apparent in Bronx county where voters reported having to travel more than an hour via bus to reach their poll location. Other Bronx voters said that even with a bus route nearby they'd still have to walk a mile or more to reach their poll site.

II. Poll Site Operations

a. Voting Equipment

Voters reported various issues with equipment throughout the early voting period. Most issues were said to have been resolved quickly and without causing too much disruption. In some situations, voters reported experiencing a delay in the check in line due to an issue with the new machines. Poll sites that

only had three or fewer electronic poll books or ballot on demand printers experienced higher instances of check in line backup. In Albany, Dutchess, and Monroe voters reported experiencing longer wait times when a printer or electronic poll book malfunctioned.



In the above graph correlating the average wait time of voters, three of the four respondents who reported waiting 60 minutes or more voted in Monroe county. The seven voters who reported waiting 30 to 60 minutes, voted in Nassau, Broome, Erie, Kings, and Suffolk. Two of the seven voters cited printer issues as the reason for their longer than usual wait times. Notably, all voters who waited 30 minutes or longer still rated their experience positively and said they would vote early again.

Ahead of the early voting period, the League surveyed county boards of elections to ask counties about their plans for onboarding new election equipment. Although the League did not have the exact number of counties who introduced new voting technology, based on voter survey responses and preliminary surveying of county boards of elections, we believe the only counties that did not introduce new voting equipment were Fulton, Genessee, Oswego, and Steuben. Voters’ overall experience using the new equipment was positive and most voters did not have an issue using the new machines. Printer issues were much more common than electronic poll book issues. Printer issues varied in severity with some printers going completely offline and others just need a change of paper or toner. Paper jams were common but easily remedied, with a few exceptions. Network issues were less common but more of a hassle to fix. The swiftness of a printer malfunction resolution depended heavily on the capabilities of the poll workers staffing the site.

Voters also mentioned issues with the electronic poll book sign in process. Some voters felt that their electronic signature did not accurately depict their “wet” on file signature. Signing in on a raised poll pad rather than a flat tablet added to the difference in signatures. Voters were concerned that their ballots may have been challenged due to the difference between the two signatures and several voters reported having to sign multiple times to have their signatures verified. In some cases, voters had to complete challenge ballots because of the discrepancies between the signatures. In Kings, New York, Monroe, Rensselaer, Rockland, Saratoga, St. Lawrence, Suffolk, Ulster, and Onondaga, voters reported having issues signing in on the electronic poll books.

b. Interactions with Poll Worker

Voters reported having an overall pleasant experience with poll workers when voting early. With only a few exceptions, voters found early voting poll workers to be friendly and accommodating. Several voters did note that poll workers at multiple sites did not seem to be adequately trained on the new equipment. Some voters reported poll workers struggling to find their name on the new electronic poll books and having issues trouble shooting with ballot on demand printers. These problems are not unsurprising considering this is the first year New York State is using this advanced equipment. Most voters surveyed said they did not mind waiting slightly longer for these issues to be resolved and still reported a positive overall experience voting early.

However, an issue that has been extremely alarming to voting rights advocates and voters alike, was the reporting that several voters were asked by poll workers to present their state ID when checking in. In Albany, Onondaga, Suffolk, Tompkins, and New York City, voters reported being asked to present an ID at the sign in table. Tompkins county was reported to have signage at the poll site entrance urging voters to have their ID's ready upon entering. Although the request was made to expedite the electronic poll book voter lookup process, in some cases poll workers made the voters uncomfortable, and in one case threatened to turn the voter away if they did not present their ID. Poll worker training must make it clear that poll workers should never ask for a voter's ID.

Even if scanning the ID can speed up check in, asking for a voter's ID can make them or other voters at the site uncomfortable and even cause people to leave the poll site if they believe they cannot vote without their ID. Ulster county poll workers told voters they were not allowed to ask for an ID but in Albany and Monroe, some voters surveyed said they wish they had known scanning their ID was an option to speed up check in before they went to the polls. In 2020 voters need to be informed about New York State's law prohibiting poll workers from asking for an ID.

Although most voters felt early voting poll workers were helpful and informative, throughout the state voters noted that many sites were over staffed during the early voting period. New York, Kings, Erie, Albany, Suffolk, Monroe, Otsego, and Livingston poll sites were reported to have been over staffed with 10 or more poll workers at the site during slow early voting periods. Boards of elections could easily remedy this issue by assigning poll worker to more sites in their county.

III. Poll Site Promotion

a. Outreach

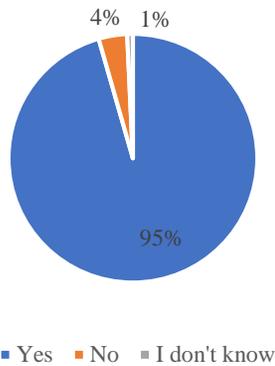
Outreach from county boards of elections varied significantly throughout the state. New York's early voting statute mandated a minimum outreach requirement for county boards to fulfill. Most counties went above and beyond this requirement, but some voters felt that their counties could have done more to inform them of the new policy. Voters surveyed in New York, Nassau, Albany, and Onondaga felt that their county boards could have done more extensive outreach.

The League's survey determined that 95% of participants found information about early voting easily, with print media bring the highest rated source of information. More than 26% of participants found information about early voting from print media. Word of mouth was another common source of information with 20% of voters surveyed saying they heard about early voting from someone they knew.

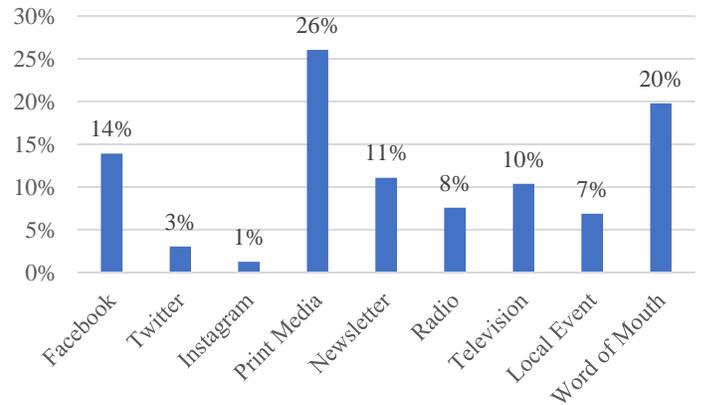
Surprisingly, only 84 participants, approximately 5%, said they found information about early voting from their county board of elections. The League received additional comments from voters about inadequate communications from county boards in Albany, Dutchess, Ulster, Bronx, Kings, and New York Counties. Albany county sent only one mailing ahead of the June primary to alert voters about the

new policy changes. Voters in Dutchess and Ulster reported inaccurate addresses listed on their counties' websites. Several counties changed their poll locations or hours at the last minute ahead of the early voting period confusing voters and in some instances preventing voters from voting early. A voter in New York county nearly missed the early voting period because she had not realized her site was changed and reported to the wrong location on the final day of early voting.

Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Statewide)



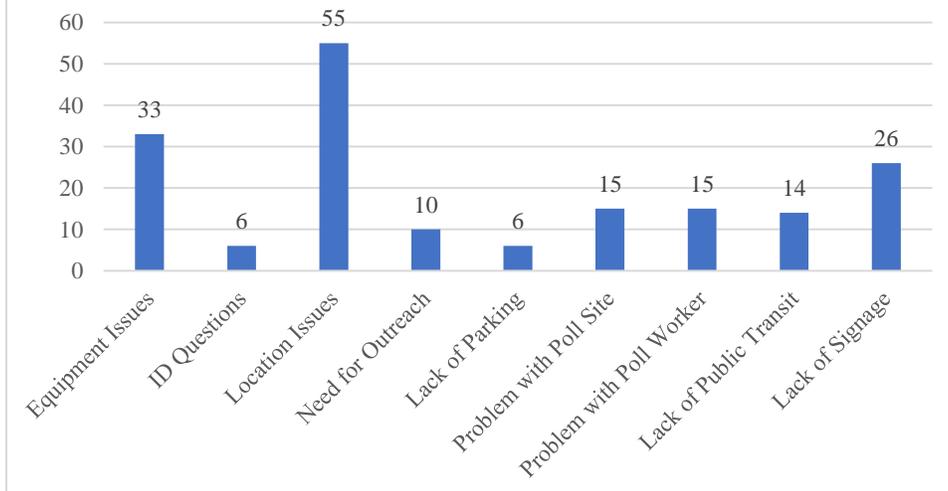
How did you learn about early voting? (Statewide)



b. Signage

Last minute poll site change issues were further exaggerated by a lack of signage at poll sites. Voters reported issues finding their early voting poll sites due to insufficient signage around or near their early voting locations. Voters in Albany, Dutchess, Erie, Kings, Richmond, Rensselaer, Nassau, Oneida, Otsego, Suffolk, and Warren found that signage outside of their early voting poll sites were not easily visible. A total of 26 voters said that more prominent signage would have helped them find their poll sites more easily. Voters felt that signage should be displayed not only within the buildings housing poll sites, but also on nearby roads and highways.

Common Early Voting Issues



Recommendations

c. Adjusting Site Locations

The League recommends that all county boards of elections consider our surveyed voters' comments and adjust their poll site locations to accommodate voters from across their counties. Poll sites that did not have public transportation or parking access should be moved to address those inadequacies. County boards should also consider room size and electrical power capabilities when selecting additional or new poll site locations.

Voters should have the opportunity to vote at any poll site within their county. Counties should not assign poll sites as it limits voter's ability to cast their ballot and risks diminishing overall early voting turnout. The 34 counties that hosted a single early voting poll site should consider expanding to more than one polling location. Many voters reported having too many poll workers at their site when they went to vote early, these poll workers could be designated to an alternative site during the 2020 elections.

Based on survey comments, the League would urge commissioners to carefully consider potential site locations that are housed in a larger shopping center or mall. Although these locations could bring in more foot traffic from shoppers, they can also confuse voters if there is not adequate signage. Signage at poll sites in general should be increased across the state. Poll sites should have signage not only outside the poll facility but also on nearby roads and highways where voters may be driving to the site.

d. Increasing Poll worker Training

Poll workers need more extensive training on the new electronic poll book and ballot on demand equipment. The League would also encourage county boards to conduct their training closer to the early voting period. Several poll workers said that although they felt they had been trained adequately on the new technology, their training sessions were held long before the early voting period began. Counties should consider focusing training on trouble shooting the ballot on demand printers and electronic poll books.

Counties should also conduct addition training for poll workers to inform them of New York State's voter ID laws. Poll workers should never ask a voter for their ID and the ID scanning function of electronic poll books should be disabled. Poll workers should be encouraged to report any instances of voter's being asked to present their ID.

e. Addressing Equipment Issues

Many of the issues found in the use of voting systems can be substantially reduced by improving management practices such as personnel training. Boards of elections should require tracking and documentation of all procedures from the testing of machines to the handling of ballots. Transparency in the operation and management of voting systems must be maintained and rigorous testing of every voting machines should be conducted before the early voting period to ensure equipment is operating properly. The League recommends conducting uniform, public testing of voting systems to maintain transparency and ensure public trust in those who have questioned the new technology.

Boards should restrict physical access to all components of voting system and educate voters on the use of all voting equipment both in advance of the election and at the polling place. Poll workers should receive more extensive training on the machines and be provided with a back-up plan in the event of machine failure. Boards should design a routine process that checks for problems that may have occurred but have not been visible during the early voting period or on Election Day.

The League also strongly urges that all electronic poll book ID scanners be disabled, and voters and poll workers educated on why identification should only be requested at a poll site in instances where voters who register by mail and have not verified their identity. In counties where voter ID cards were used, boards must conduct additional education and outreach to ensure voters know that using these scan cards is not mandatory and is only used to expedite the check in process, not to verify a voters' ID or eligibility to vote.

f. Expanding Board of Elections Outreach

Although 95% of voters said they were able to easily find information about early voting, the number of voters who had difficulty finding that information from their board of elections is far too high. Boards of elections need to make a more concerted effort to inform voters ahead of the early voting period. This issue will be even more pressing in 2020 when voters will have three early voting periods. Boards of elections should consider using email outreach in addition to mail correspondence. Boards of elections should prioritize early voting materials on their websites and ensure that they are easy to find. Counties should also work with local news outlets to publicize site locations in the week leading up to the early voting period and during the early voting period.

The state board should mandate that counties select their early voting poll locations far enough in advance so that both the media and election advocates sharing poll site locations, have enough time to create materials to publicize site locations and hours. If a county board does have to change a site location or time, the county should make a greater effort to inform voters of these changes again drawing on the media to publicize the changes.

Conclusion

The League of Women Voters applauds the New York State Board of Elections and all 62 county boards of elections for their tireless work in making the first year of early voting a success. Thank you to the dedicated election commissioners, staff, and volunteers, who worked tirelessly to finally bring early voting to New York State. Early voting in 2019 was far from perfect but it was a fantastic first run. We are looking forward to seeing improvements in our early voting operations ahead of the 2020 primaries and general election. The League will continue to work to educate voters about the early voting period and we hope to continue to collaborate with the Board of Elections and the New York State Legislature on making these necessary changes.

Appendix A: Early Voting Survey

This survey was written and distributed by the League of Women Voters of New York State, a nonpartisan organization helping to educate voters. We appreciate your participation in this survey about your experience with early voting. The survey results will be shared with county boards of elections, the members of the Assembly and Senate Elections Committees, and the NYS Board of Elections so that corrections and improvements to the process can be made.

1. Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily?
 - Yes
 - No
 - I don't know

2. How did you learn about early voting?
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - Print Media
 - A Newsletter
 - Radio
 - Television
 - A Local Event
 - Word of Mouth
 - Other _____

3. What is your county or town? _____

4. Where did you go to vote? (your polling place) _____

5. How long did you wait to vote?
 - 0 to 5 minutes
 - 5 to 15 minutes
 - 15 to 30 minutes
 - 30 to 60 minutes
 - 60 or more minutes

6. Did your polling site have new technology?
 - Yes, it had a new sign-in process
 - Yes, it had a new ballot printing process
 - Yes, it had a new ballot scanner (ballot receiver)
 - No
 - I don't know

7. Was all the equipment working properly?
 - Yes
 - No, the electronic poll book was not

- No, the on-demand printer was not
- No, the ballot marking device was not
- No, the scanner (ballot receiver) was not

8. Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

9. Why did you choose to vote early?

- I couldn't vote on election day
- I wanted to try early voting
- Early voting worked better for my schedule
- Other

10. Would you vote early again?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

11. How would you describe your overall early voting experience (good, fair, poor)? Please explain.

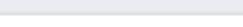
12. How could your early voting experience have been made better?

Appendix B: Summary of Statewide Survey Results

Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes			1691	94.4 %
No			69	3.8 %
I don't know			15	<1 %
No Response(s)			16	<1 %
Totals			1791	100%

How did you learn about early voting?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Facebook			305	17.2 %
Twitter			69	3.8 %
Instagram			28	1.5 %
Print Media			569	32.0 %
A Newsletter			245	13.8 %
Radio			176	9.9 %
Television			232	13.0 %
A Local Event			148	8.3 %
Word of Mouth			422	23.8 %
Other			720	40.6 %
Totals			1773	100%

Did your polling site have new technology?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes, it had a new sign-in process			1546	87.7 %
Yes, it had a new ballot printing process			784	44.4 %
Yes, it had a new ballot scanner (ballot receiver)			402	22.8 %
No			38	2.1 %
I don't know			109	6.1 %
Totals			1762	100%

How long did you wait to vote?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
0 to 5 minutes			1563	87.2 %
5 to 15 minutes			172	9.6 %
15 to 30 minutes			13	<1 %
30 to 60 minutes			7	<1 %
60 or more minutes			5	<1 %
No Response(s)			31	1.7 %
Totals			1791	100%

Was all the equipment working properly?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes			1658	95.7 %
No, the electronic poll book was not			22	1.2 %
No, the on demand printer was not			42	2.4 %
No, the ballot marking device was not			3	<1 %
No, the scanner (ballot receiver) was not			18	1.0 %
Totals			1731	100%

Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes			822	45.8 %
No			250	13.9 %
I don't know			691	38.5 %
No Response(s)			28	1.5 %
Totals			1791	100%

Why did you choose to vote early?

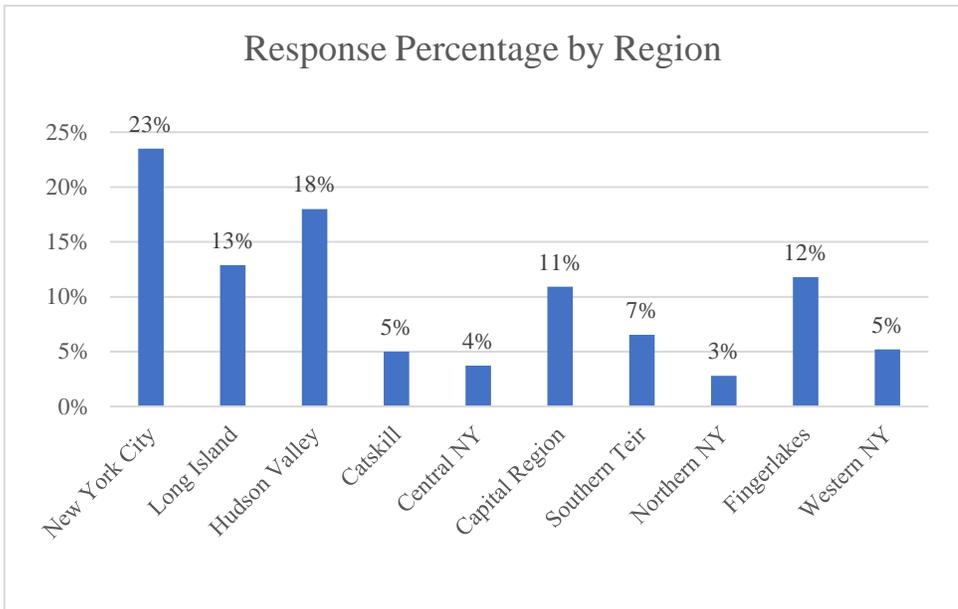
Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
I couldn't vote on election day			223	12.6 %
I wanted to try early voting			1077	61.2 %
Early voting worked better for my schedule			505	28.7 %
Other			237	13.4 %
Totals			1757	100%

Would you vote early again?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes			1636	91.3 %
No			18	1.0 %
Maybe			105	5.8 %
No Response(s)			32	1.7 %
Totals			1791	100%

****Response totals vary because not all survey takers completed all 12-survey question ****

Response Percentage by Region



County Name	Response Total	Poll Sites In County	County Name	Response Total	Poll Sites In County
Albany	89	8	Oneida	17	3
Allegany	2	1	Onondaga	42	6
Broome	51	3	Ontario	10	3
Bronx	26	11	Orange	14	7
Cattaraugus	6	2	Orleans	0	1
Cayuga	4	3	Oswego	4	1
Chautauqua	9	2	Otsego	21	1
Chemung	5	1	Putnam	11	1
Chenango	0	1	Queens	37	14
Clinton	9	1	Richmond	36	9
Columbia	12	3	Rensselaer	6	2
Cortand	8	1	Rockland	40	4
Delaware	4	1	Saratoga	59	3
Dutchess	49	5	Schenectady	28	4
Erie	67	37	Schuyler	2	1
Essex	3	1	Seneca	2	1
Franklin	1	1	St Lawrence	26	1
Fulton	2	1	Schoharie	1	1
Genesee	2	1	Steuben	2	1
Greene	0	1	Suffolk	142	10
Hamilton	1	1	Sullivan	6	1
Herkimer	1	1	Tioga	0	1
Jefferson	0	1	Tompkins	19	2
Kings	122	18	Ulster	61	7
Livingston	1	1	Warren	6	1
Lewis	0	1	Washington	2	1
Madison	4	1	Wayne	2	1
Monroe	179	7	Westchester	195	17
Montgomery	3	1	Wyoming	0	1
Nassau	79	15	Yates	0	1
New York	182	9	Totals	1715	250
Niagara	3	2			

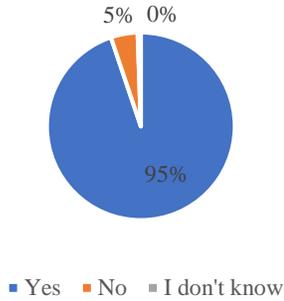
Appendix C: Regional Data Analysis

I. New York City Results

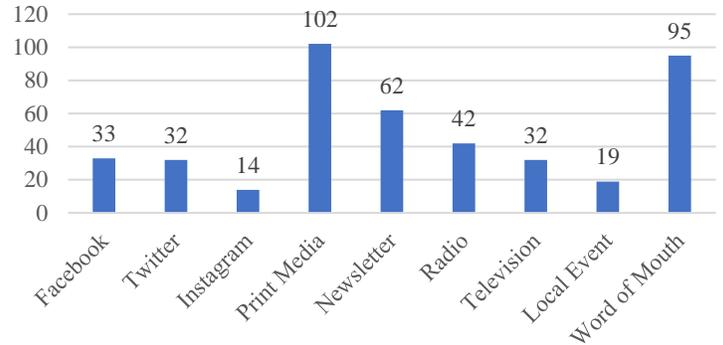
Total New York City Survey Responses: 403

Counties Included: Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, Richmond

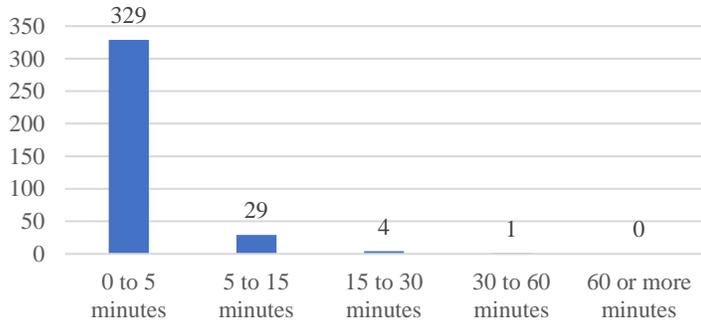
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (New York City)



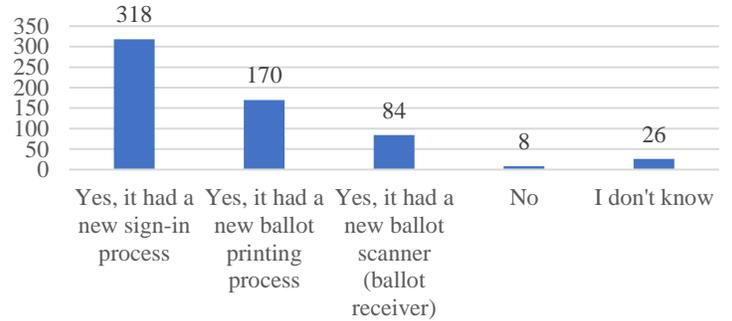
How did you learn about early voting? (New York City)



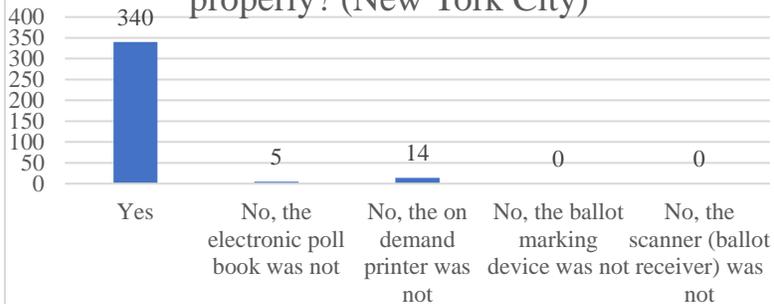
How long did you wait to vote? (New York City)



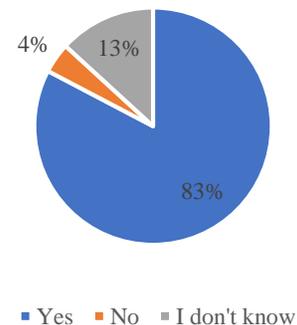
Did your poll site have new technology? (New York City)

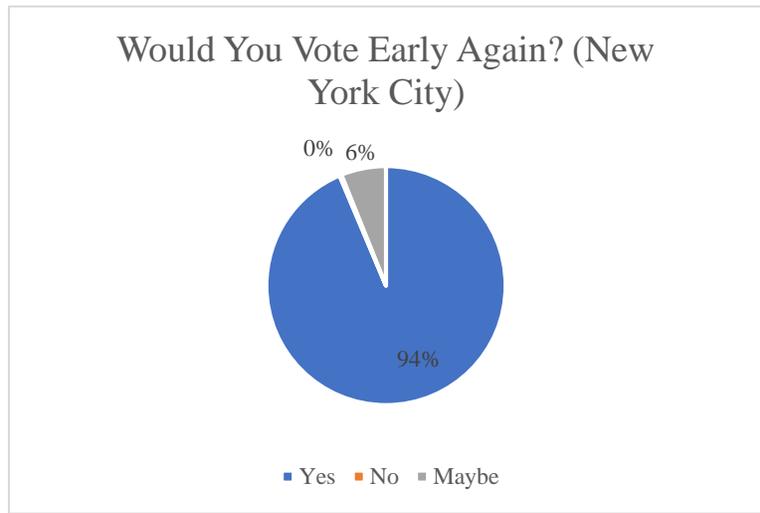
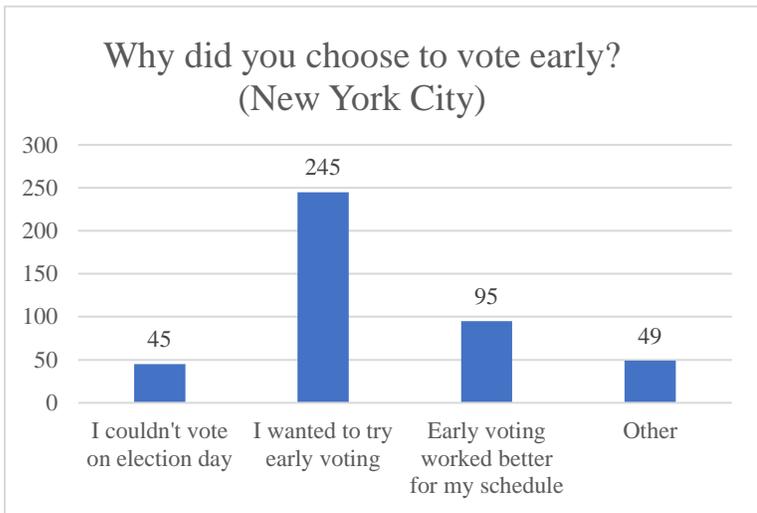


Was all the equipment working properly? (New York City)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (New York City)





Notable Comments from New York City Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- I want to be able to vote early but the location is an hour away by bus. There is no train service in that neighborhood. It is also an area where there is very little evening transit. (Bronx)
- I would have liked to vote early but my early voting site is much farther from my home than my regular polling site. (Bronx)
- The choice of the Co-Op City Bronx polling site was dreadful. Even being dropped off as close as possible, it was a quarter mile walk to the entrance. Going by bus would double that! The Truman gym is also way too large. That added yet more walking within the gym to reach the privacy booths after check in. (Bronx, Co-Op City)
- The room we were in had very bad acoustics. I have hearing aids and the noise was so loud and echoey that it was difficult for me to understand what the kind people helping me were saying. (Kings, Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice)
- It was actually closed when I scheduled myself to vote there, twice. (4pm closing time). Had to vote on Election Day after all. The school needs to open its 101st Street entrance. I had to walk 3 additional blocks to get to the opened 102nd Street entrance! Huge difference for me; I'm disabled. (New York, West Side High School)
- I was very disappointed that there were no polling sites in the lower west side. (New York, The Clinton School for Writers and Artists)
- I went online: typed in my full address 29-11 Queens plaza north, long island city NY 11101: it told me to LAGUARDIA COLLEGE for early voting. I went there, they told me I had to go to MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE instead. (New York, Museum of Moving Image)
- If my early voting location is located closer and more convenient, I will participate in early voting. (New York)
- The wrong site was sent in the mail several times. Only inadvertently did I learn generally of the new site-ran into someone working early voting polls. Most people in my area have the wrong early voting poll address. Other than that, voting was easy and quick. (New York, John Jay College North Hall)

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- Only glitch was that the printer didn't have paper, so it took a few extra minutes to print my ballot. And that my early voting site was 20 mins away from my address. (Kings)
- I had received the card with the bar code in the mail. The folks at the information desk erroneously insisted that I stop there, where they looked up my address and then told me my AD number (which I already know). Otherwise experience was fine. (Kings, Park Slope Armory YMCA)
- Board of election workers are extremely ill prepared for basic responsibilities such as looking up peoples names and explaining what is going on. On the first day of early voting there were too many BoE workers. It felt very much like a make-work project. (Kings, Park Slope Armory YMCA)
- Mine was the 5th ballot to be printed at the station, and only 1 side printed. Printer apparently jammed, took 3 tries to clear, plus 3 resign-ins by me. The original ballot was marked void and put in "ballot supply" envelope. Is there a recon process in place to ensure # ballots printed = # votes cast + # ballots voided? (Kings, Clara Barton Voc. HS)
- A poll worker asked if I had my election card or other ID. I refused, said she was not to ask for ID. Other worker only had me spell my name, found me readily in system. (New York, The Clinton School for Writers and Artists)
- There were two voters at the site and about 30 poll workers. The poll workers were not properly trained to use the Ipads and 4 could not find my name, although I have voted in every election, living at the same address since 2001. One even told me to write in a provisional ballot, I refused and a 5th found my name. (New York, West Side High School)
- Poll workers were great but connectivity issues meant a long wait for my ballot to be printed even though it wasn't crowded. (New York, The Clinton School for Writers and Artists)
- Volunteers not sure how to find my name with new equipment and having to get a few people to correct the problem. (Queens, La Guardia Community College)
- What shocked me was how many board of elections workers were there. 50-75? Seemed like a colossal waste of money for this particular election. (New York, Jackie Robinson Complex)
- My signature on a tablet with a stylus differs from my signature with a pen on paper. I hope this won't cause ID problems in the future. (New York, Jackie Robinson Complex)

On Signage and Outreach:

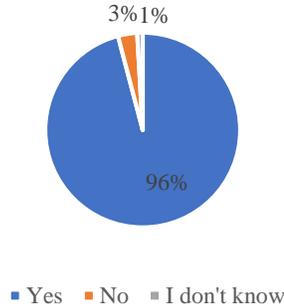
- There need to be more signs outside the building to identify the polling place. The entrance I used was not accessible at all and there were no signs directing people to the accessible entrance. (Kings, Clara Barton Voc. HS)
- More signs around the neighborhood. If I weren't online, I don't know if I could figure out what was going on by just walking through the neighborhood. (New York, The Clinton School for Writers and Artists)
- The location of the polling site was incorrect on the website and signage was not prominent. (New York, John Jay College North Hall)
- Aside from the voting site being difficult to get to, it is on the furthest eastern edge of the area, and not easily accessible to large portions of the districts covered, it was a good experience. (New York, George Washington High School)
- Better signage to the entrance door for voting. There should have been signs along Lindbergh Ave. and Clawson indicating with an arrow where to enter. (There were parents standing around waiting for their children to finish the State Testing that was going on & it was confusing). (Richmond, Staten Island Technical High School)
- Signage on building very poor, not conspicuous visibility from the street. (Richmond, Ocean Breeze Athletic Complex)

II. Long Island Results

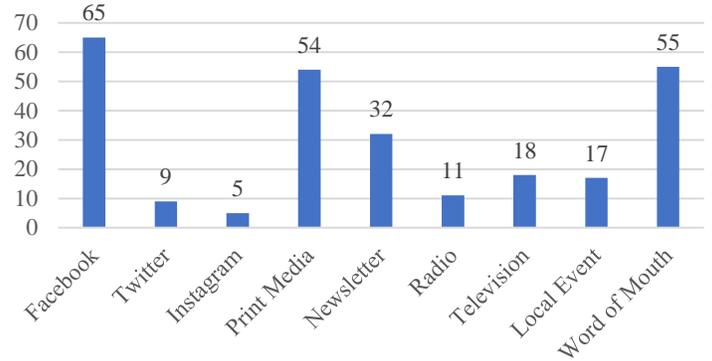
Total Long Island Survey Responses: 221

Counties Included: Nassau, Suffolk

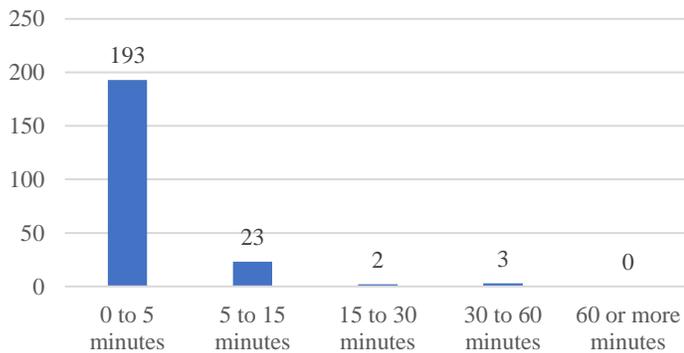
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Long Island)



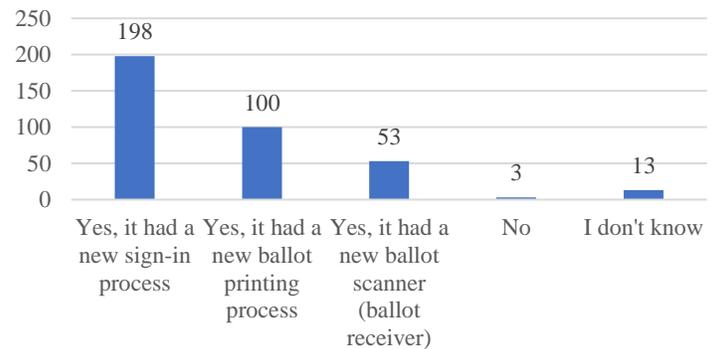
How did you learn about early voting? (Long Island)



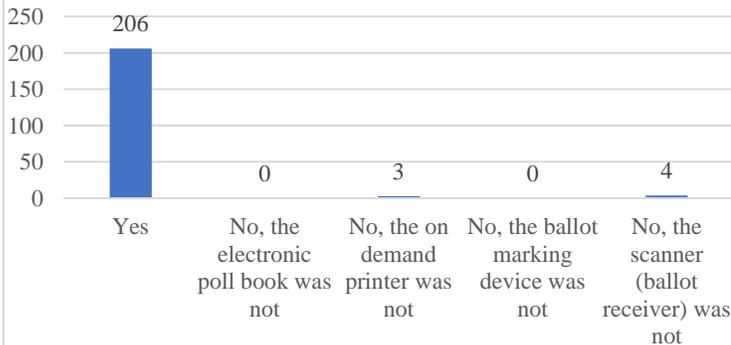
How long did you wait to vote? (Long Island)



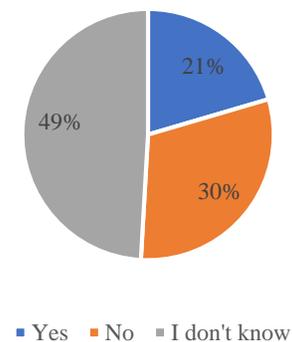
Did your polling site have new technology? (Long Island)

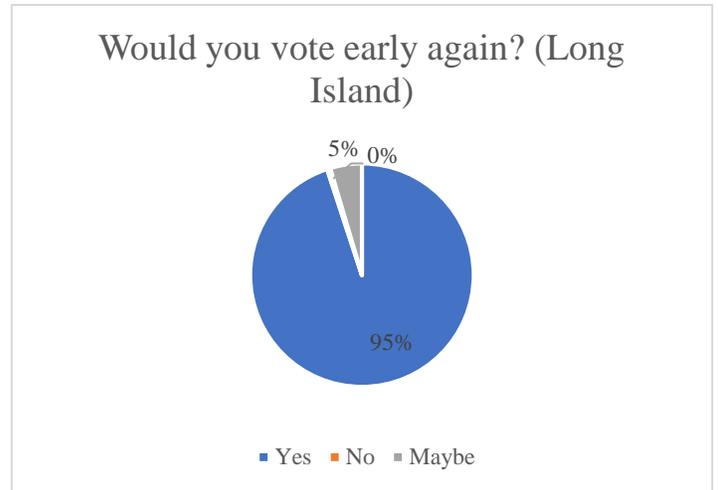
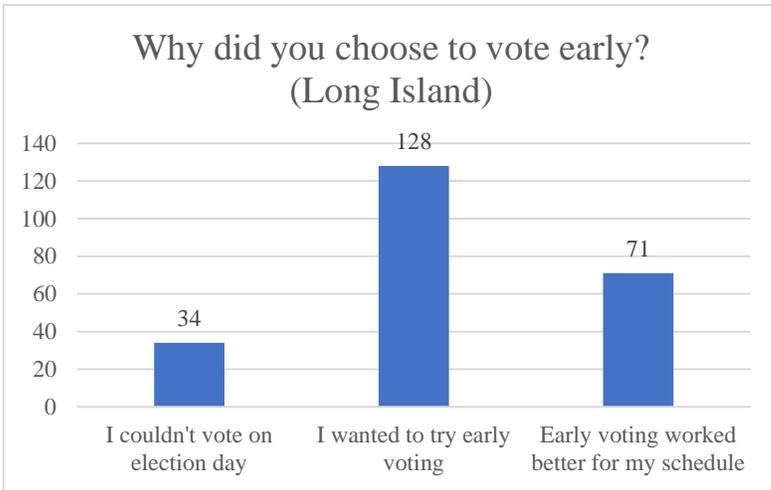


Was all the equipment working properly? (Long Island)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Long Island)





Notable Comments from Long Island Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- The room was small and if there was more of a crowd I could easily see people walking away before they voted. (Nassau, Mid Island Y-JCC)
- Want location closer to home. (Nassau, North Merrick Library)
- Need designated Parking. (Nassau, Nassau County Board of Elections)
- I just wish there were early voting locations closer to my town of Great Neck. The closest options were 15-20 min away and none in the town of north Hempstead. (Nassau, Nassau County Board of Elections)
- More locations. Long Beach should have one because it's on a barrier island. (Nassau, Rockville Center Recreation Center)
- Some family members had NO locations at all in their Town (North Hempstead) besides Mineola HQ. (Nassau, Floral Park Rec. Center)
- Needed a larger space as room was very crowded at times there were more poll watchers and made it a little overwhelming for voters walking in Also made the room even more crowded at one time there were 10 poll watchers. (Nassau, Mid Island Y-JCC)
- There needs to be more locations. The location I went to is not convenient for me on a normal day but I was in the area that day so chose to go there. On a normal day, I wouldn't drive that far to go to vote and would just rather vote on Election Day at my usual site. (Nassau, Wantagh Public Library)
- The polling place was a 20-minute drive from our house in Glen Cove. There should be polling places on each North Shore Peninsula such as Little Neck, Great Neck, Port Washington, Glen Cove, Oyster Bay, Cold Spring Harbor. (Nassau, Floral Park Rec. Center)
- Better parking, and a better ramp to get down to the main floor. A temporary one was constructed and would have been difficult to navigate for my disabled mother. (Suffolk, Islip Town Hall Annex)
- Overall good experience although parking was limited and it is a dangerous high traffic location, not easily/safely accessed. (Suffolk, Dix Hills Fire Department)
- Volunteers informed us the school was filled with mold and was no longer used by students. Why would the state allow it to be used instead for public voting if it was considered a health hazard? (Suffolk, Nesconset Elementary School)
- The polling site had very limited parking, and if you went to the actual address of the school, you couldn't get in. You had to drive 5 min to a back entrance on another main road with parking for

less than 50 cars. I would have been concerned if it had been a busy day. (Suffolk, Nesconset Elementary School)

- Very disappointed that in a township as physically big as Brookhaven with population of about half a million people that there is only one early voting place. (Suffolk)

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- Poll inspectors not sure how to handle voters who have a last name change or address change and not allowing them to vote by casting instead do an affidavit. (Poll worker - Suffolk)
- Poll Inspectors not understanding that NYS does not require to show ID at the time of Voting unless the system prompts them to and do not know why. They all seem to be unclear of the state verification system that once a registered voter is already verified through the NYS and BOE of whatever county they reside in has been notified. (Poll worker – Suffolk)
- I found there were more poll watchers than inspectors. They were seated in a row against the wall, forcing the privacy booths to be in the middle of the room, where the watchers could watch what they were doing. They could easily intimidate a timid individual. The JCC is a good location, as it is near bus lines, and has ample parking. (Nassau, Mid Island Y-JCC)
- My ballot caused a paper jam in the machine, and my name was misspelled in the electronic sign in result (but spelled correctly at the online NYS Board of Elections registration lookup site). (Suffolk, Southold Senior Center)
- My only concern is that there were SO many employees there. Seemed a great deal more than when Election Day is only one day. Lots of people milling around with nothing to do. I guess this better than too few, but I kept thinking of the cost on tax payers. (Suffolk, Islip Town Hall Annex)
- I was trained to work on the new voting system, so I knew what to expect, however, the feel of the poll was as if all the people working there were just feeling out their rolls. There were too many people standing around and I was frequently told where to go. Since the printers weren't working quickly there was a big line to pick up ballots. (Suffolk, Dix Hills Fire Department)
- The process was fairly easy for me, but I went with my parents who mainly speak Spanish and the polling location only had 1 bilingual person, for what I noticed. (Suffolk, Babylon Town Hall Annex)
- More resources need to be devoted to supporting the technology, including a better solution than a low-bandwidth Bluetooth network supporting five tablets and all the printers, and also to facilitate faster communication between the voting place and whatever secure off-site servers you're using for security. (Suffolk, Islip Town Hall Annex)
- I also really was surprised that the space between the Attestation and the signature line was so small, especially since there was a lot of blank space available above. It did not feel user friendly. Suffolk, Babylon Town Hall Annex)

On Signage and Outreach:

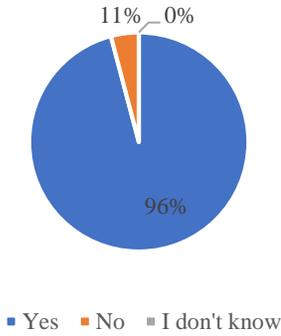
- There was no sign by the Recreational Center. (Nassau, Floral Park Recreational Center)
- Overall, I think there should be more press about it. I was shocked at how few people knew this was an option. (Nassau, Floral Park Rec. Center)
- Need direct notification rather than learning about it through Newsday. (Nassau, Mid Island Y-JCC)
- The signs to get to the polling place could have been better since the location of the polling place did NOT match the address online. It was on Browns Rd not Gibbs Pind are as the post indicated. Luckily, the fire Dept knew where to send me (Suffolk, Nesconset Elementary School)
- It was fine except the sign for how to get into the building was unclear. Most went to the entrance used before for school budget votes. (Suffolk, Nesconset Elementary School)
- Better signage and directions needed. (Suffolk, Nesconset Elementary School)
- Signage was very small, easy to miss. (Suffolk, Nesconset Elementary School)

III. Hudson Valley

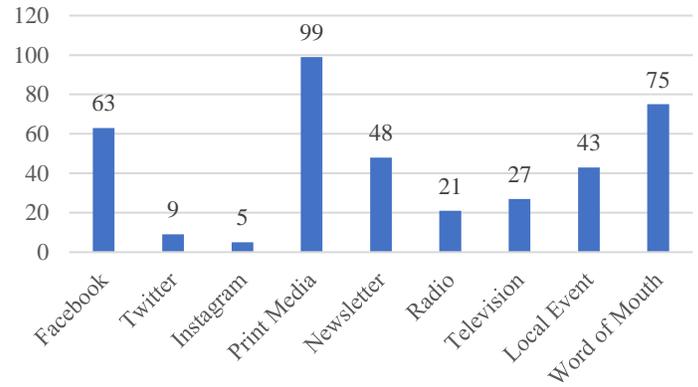
Total Hudson Valley Survey Responses: 310

Counties Included: Columbia, Dutchess, Putnam, Rockland, Westchester

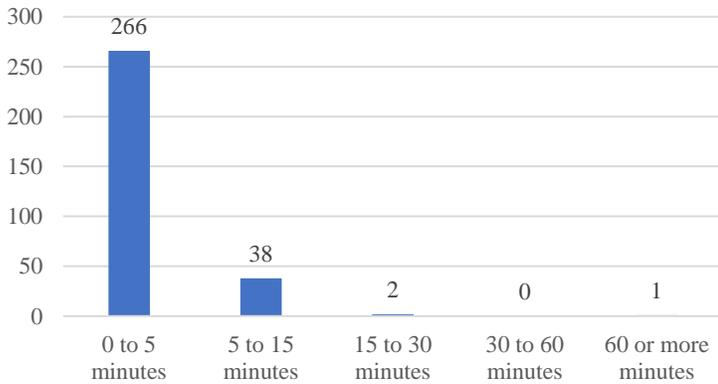
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Hudson Valley)



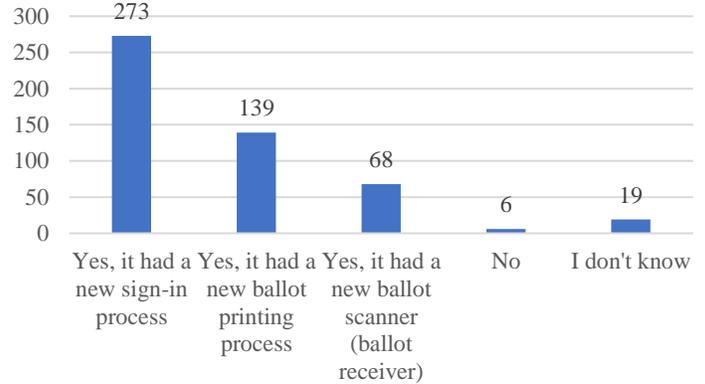
How did you learn about early voting? (Hudson Valley)



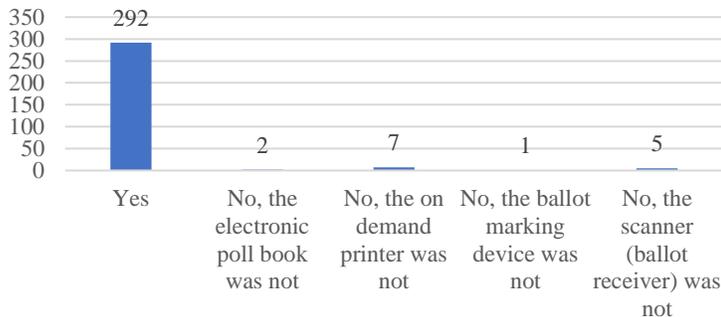
How long did you wait to vote? (Hudson Valley)



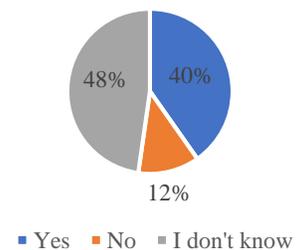
Did your polling site have new technology? (Hudson Valley)

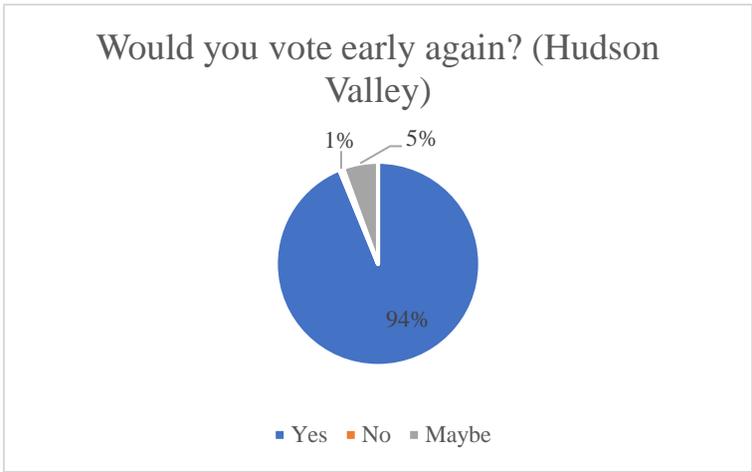
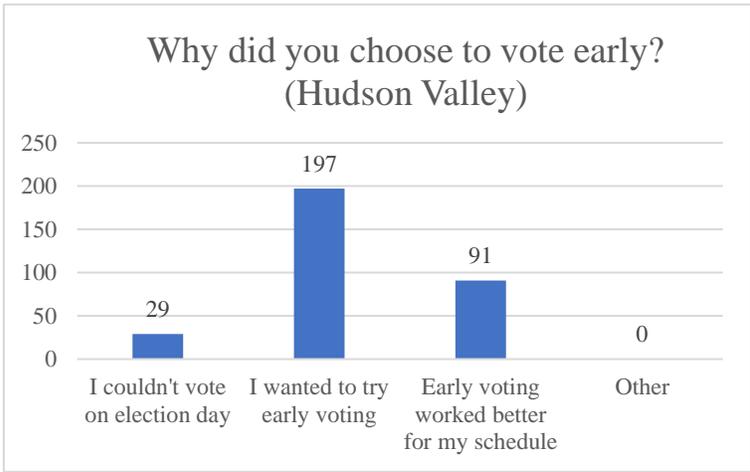


Was all the equipment working properly? (Hudson Valley)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Hudson Valley)





Notable Comments from Hudson Valley Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- Need more polling sites closer to home. (Dutchess, Dutchess County Board of Elections)
- If it was accessible via public transportation or had shuttle buses running from major public transportation hubs (i.e. train station) that would have been more convenient. (Dutchess, Union Vale Town Hall)
- Important to site them where the most people can reach them, and by public transit. (Dutchess, Dutchess County Board of Elections)
- Eastern Dutchess needs early voting sites. (Dutchess, Fishkill Town Hall)
- I needed to drive 25 minutes to get there from Millerton. Then when drove there -walked the 3 blocks to the Fire Station - but no signs on road side to say where to enter. I saw a woman coming from a sidewalk up behind the building and asked her she confirmed entrance to back I asked why no signs? They were afraid it would be stolen. (Dutchess, Millbrook Fire House)
- My experience was good because I had a car, but someone relying on the bus would probably take hours to get to such a remote location, and the elections workers couldn't tell me anything credible about buses and roundtrip times during the week from Oneonta. It's not equal access. I couldn't even understand the online bus schedule. (Putnam, Putnam County Board of Elections)
- Putnam County NY is about 27 miles across and in all that space there is only one early voting location. (Putnam, Putnam County Board of Elections)
- Just a bit less crowding in the room where the early voting was held. The adjacent room was much larger and would have been a better choice. (Westchester, Eastchester Public Library)
- The polling place was a bit far away from Port Washington (probably 8 miles). Although it was listed as being in Glen Head (and technically the zip code is Glen Head) it was really in Brookville. (Westchester, Greenburgh Town Hall)
- Parking at this site isn't easy or free, voting area is cramped (a foyer), stations could have been better set up for people flow. (Westchester, Dobbs Ferry Village Hall)
- Very good, but location was very tight and didn't provide enough privacy when filling out the ballot. (Westchester, Mt. Kisco Town Hall)

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- Signing in took too long. There were 2 devices with one having a problem, leaving only one for signing in. The actual signing in was slow, repeating letters and names to a person who was tapping on the device. (Dutchess, Rhinebeck Town Hall)
- It seemed like only one poll worker knew how to work the poll books and she was bombarded with questions from the others that brought the sign in line to a stand still as all four people

stopped what they were doing to work on a single issue with one Person Trying to Sign In.
(Dutchess)

- Good but ballot receiving machine did not alert a missing proposition vote on back of ballot.
(Westchester, Mamaroneck Town Center)
- The electronic poll book did not generate a signature to match against, so I had to do a challenge ballot. (Rockland, Haverstraw Town Hall)

On Signage and Outreach:

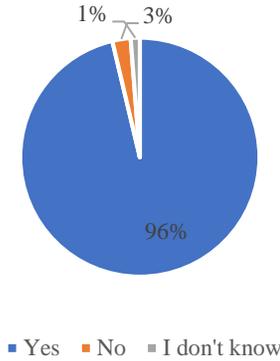
- More external signage to the appropriate entrance and parking. (Dutchess, Union Vale Town Hall)
- Better information on our Dutchess county board of election site on when/where/how to vote early. (Dutchess, Rhinebeck Town Hall)
- Better outside signage needed. (Dutchess, Dutchess County Board of Elections)
- Signage on Route 32 could have been more visual. (Dutchess, Millbrook Fire House)
- Dutchess County Board of Elections did not have clear info on its website about voting locations.
(Dutchess, Dutchess County Board of Elections)

IV. Catskill Results

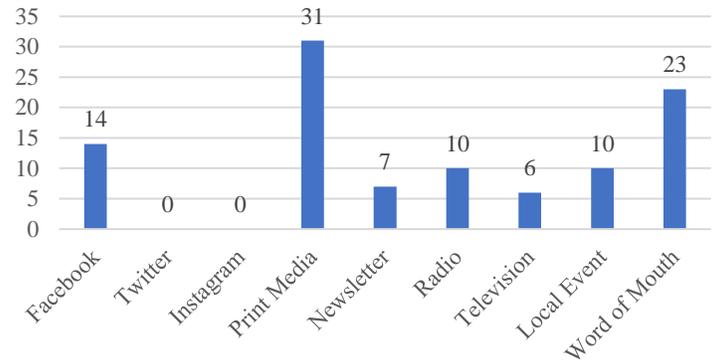
Total Catskill Survey Responses: 83

Counties Included: Orange, Ulster, Schoharie, Sullivan

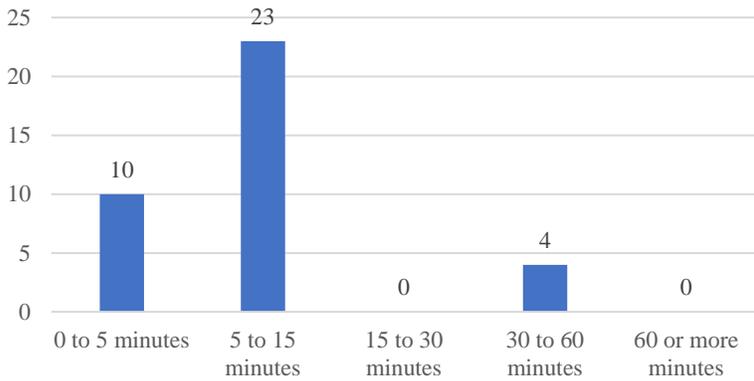
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Catskill)



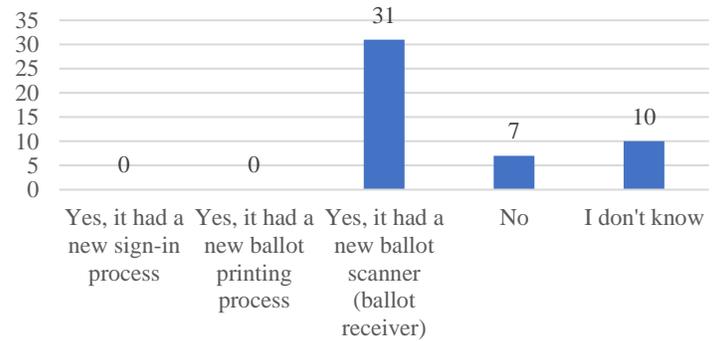
How did you learn about early voting? (Catskill)



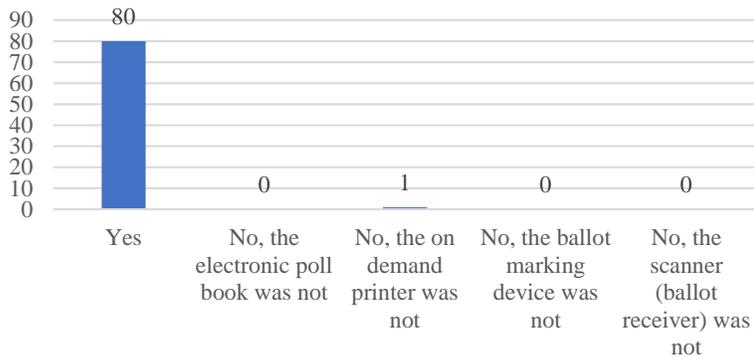
How long did you wait to vote? (Catskill)



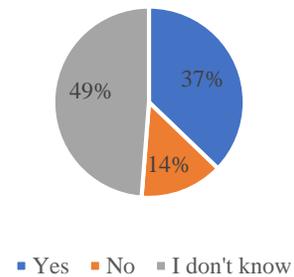
Did your polling site have new technology? (Catskill)

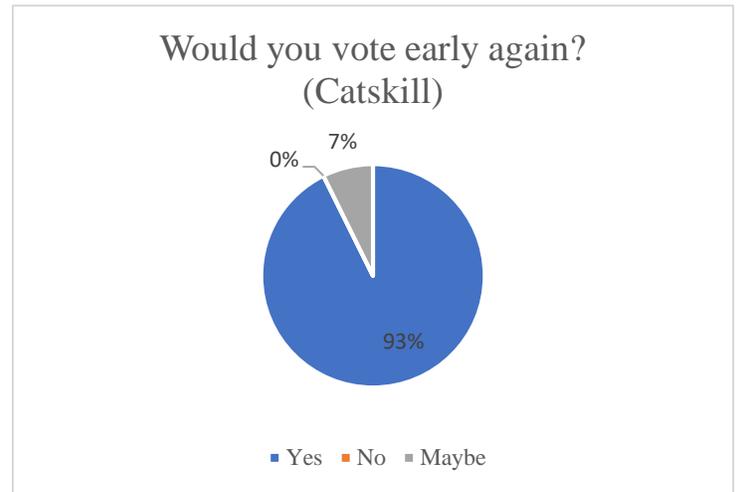
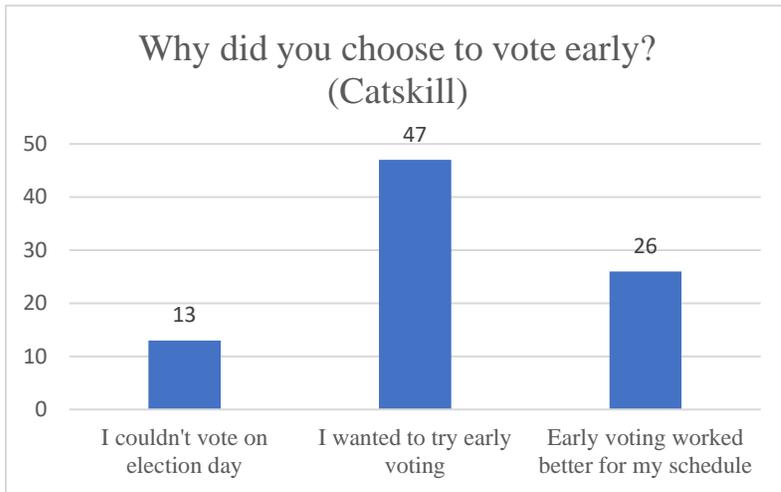


Was all the equipment working properly? (Catskill)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Catskill)





Notable Comments from Catskill Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- Had to drive 10 miles to get there. (Orange, Middletown Senior Center)
- Have polls in Saugerties available to those living in Saugerties. (Ulster, SUNY Ulster at Kingston)
- I did not use public transportation, but the buses do not run on Sunday, so at least inaccessible that day and perhaps into evening hours on weekdays. (Ulster, SUNY Ulster at Kingston)
- Have a polling station closer to my home in Saugerties. (Ulster, Woodstock Community Center)
- WCC is not an accessible site, and my husband had a lot of difficulty (including a fall) getting from the parking lot to the poll. There was rain all day, and the footing was tricky. (Ulster, Woodstock Community Center)
- The poll workers were very nice and efficient, but I had a 70-minute round trip ride to vote early. (Sullivan, Sullivan County Government Center)
- Very poor in voting location: was a 70 minute round trip drive by car while my regular polling place would have been a stop or a 20 minute round trip. (Sullivan, Sullivan County Government Center)

On Signage and Outreach:

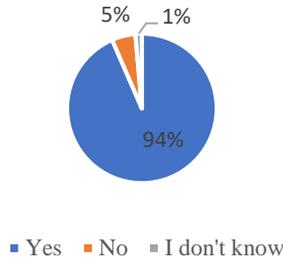
- Signage on building very poor, not conspicuous visibility from the street. (Orange, Warwick Town Hall)
- Signage could have been better. There was no entry from the lower parking area, but no signs indicated this. (Ulster, SUNY Ulster at Kingston)
- There was no sign at the polling site in a visible place in front of the church. It was very hard to locate the polling site from the 32 South. The room was very small, which did not provide adequate privacy when one voted and for the staff and the hours for early voting kept changing. (Ulster, Redeemer Lutheran Church)

V. Capital Region Results

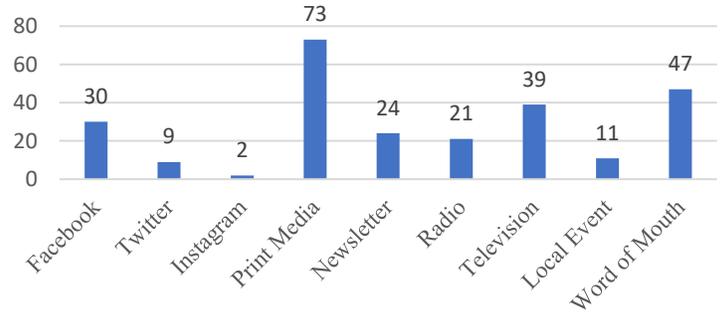
Total Capital Region Survey Responses: 187

Counties Included: Albany, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Washington

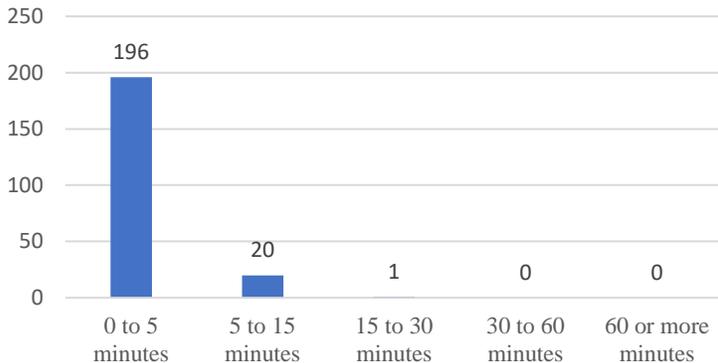
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Capital Region)



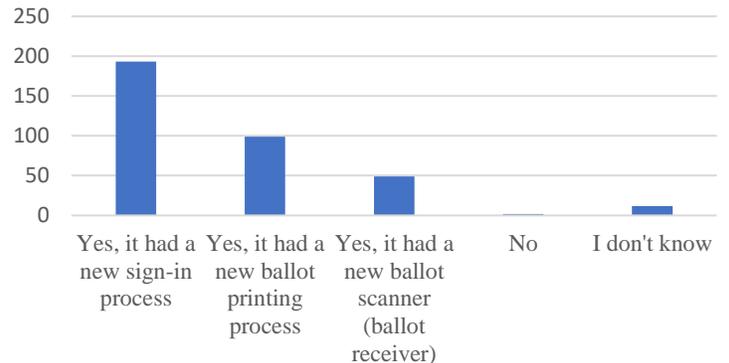
How did you learn about early voting? (Capital Region)



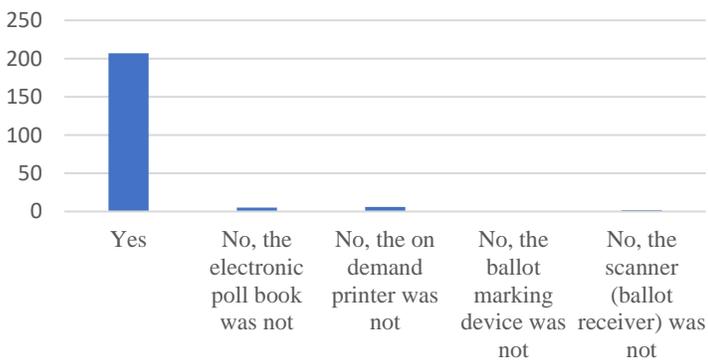
How long did you wait to vote? (Capital Region)



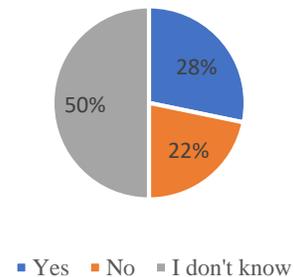
Did your polling site have new technology? (Capital Region)

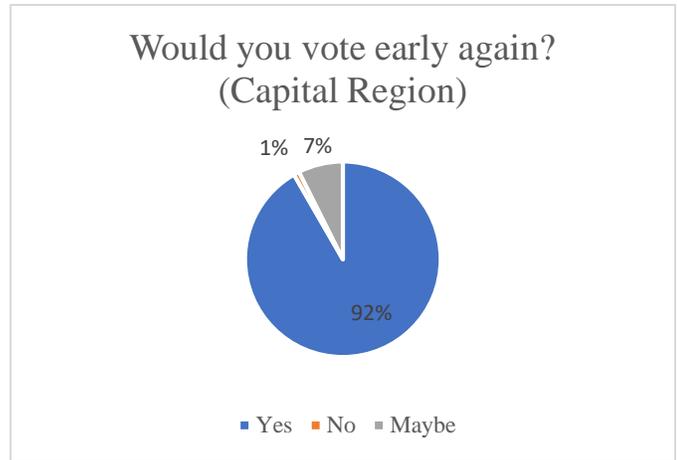
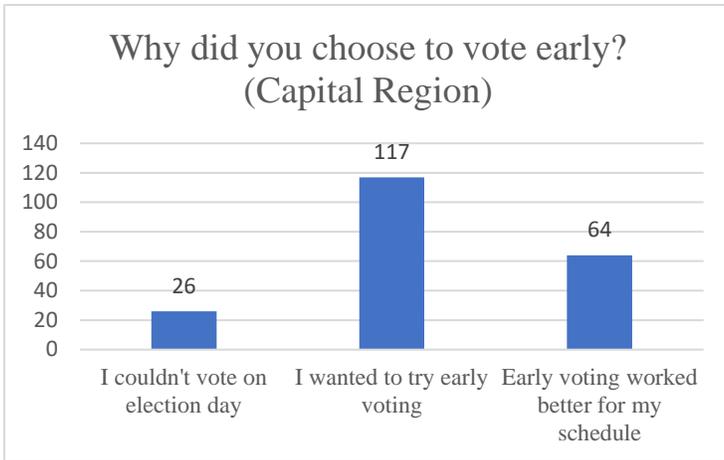


Was all the equipment working properly? (Capital Region)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Capital Region)





Notable Comments from Capital Region Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- I think Albany County should permit voters to use any of the polling places designated for early voting instead of assigning it. (Albany, Boght Community Fire Department)
- I think bigger signs directing folks to the voting site in the parish hall would be an improvement. This church has a little bit of a spread out campus and two entrances to the parking lot. (Albany, Bethlehem Lutheran Church)
- They did not have handicapped accessible door open so I needed to wait to have someone open the door versus my regular voting place which has accessibility. (Albany, Albany County Board of Elections)
- It was an excellent experience except that I had to drive and make a special effort to get to the polling place rather than voting at my usual polling place in Troy, which is within easy walking distance, and readily accessible via public transportation for those who depend on it. (Rensselaer, Schodack Town Hall)
- I didn't actually vote early because it was in Brunswick and my voting site the day of is around the corner from my home. (Rensselaer)
- Would have liked to vote in Troy, NY, my home base. The distance and remoteness of the site were clearly a detriment to a diverse turnout. (Rensselaer, Schodack Town Hall)
- If I did not have a GPS, I would not have found the Town Hall. Signage on the main roads as soon as one got into Schodak would have been helpful. (Rensselaer, Schodack Town Hall)
- Need a larger voting area. The space gave poll watchers opportunity to look over your shoulders to see who you voted for. (Saratoga, Gavin Park)
- Room where early voting was set up was small and cramped. (Saratoga, Saratoga County Board of Elections)
- The room used was small and crowded. The library may need to use the board room next year. (Saratoga, Clifton Park Halfmoon Library)
- Limited public transportation from largest city (that did not have an early voting site. (Saratoga, Saratoga County Board of Elections)

- I didn't vote early because none of the Saratoga County sites were convenient for me. Saratoga City should have had a location. (Saratoga)

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- The experience was good but 1 of 2 printers wasn't working. The working printer was out of paper then had a paper jam. My ballot wasn't automatically sent to the printer requiring my ballot to be printed manually. I did finally receive the correct ballot. (Albany, Guilderland Fire Department)
- I waited in line behind a single person for about a minute. Was told one ballot printer was down but the other was functioning so no snags. (Albany, Bethlehem Lutheran Church)
- I scanned my drivers license so I didn't have to spell my name, then she confirmed my name and address. (Albany, Bethlehem Lutheran Church)
- I worry about the validity of a signature made on an iPad with a stylus. (Rensselaer, Schodack Town Hall)

On Signage and Outreach:

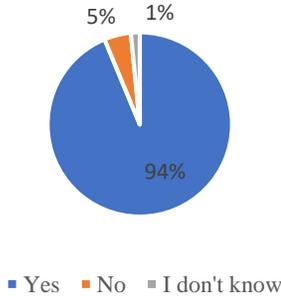
- Given the technology I don't understand why the county didn't allow for anyone to vote anywhere in the county, that made it confusing for get out the vote and where to send early voters in each town. (Albany, Albany County Board of Elections)
- The info was not clear about where I could vote. The firehouse indicated didn't have access nor a sign, so I went to the church which was the other spot to try. (Albany, Boght Community Fire Department)
- There were no poll signs outside the locations. Or signs saying vote here now, or early voting. So anyone driving by would not know it was open or a polling place. We even questioned if we got the times wrong due to lack of signage. (Albany, Bethlehem Lutheran Church)

VI. Central New York Results

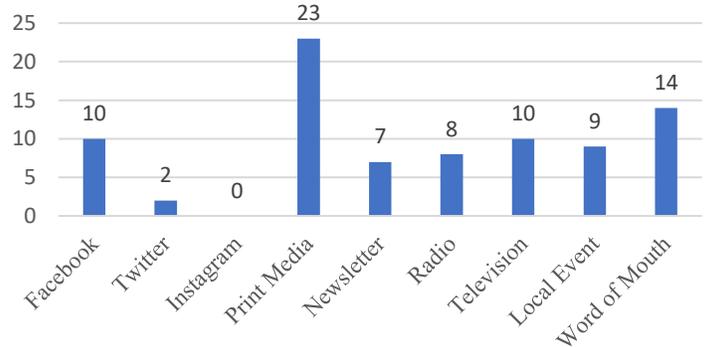
Total Central New York Survey Responses: 64

Counties Included: Herkimer, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego

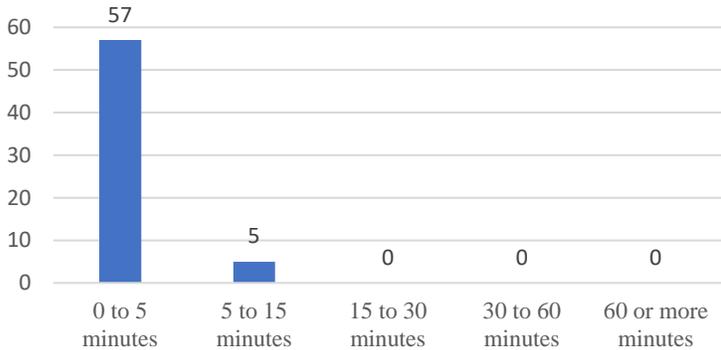
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Central New York)



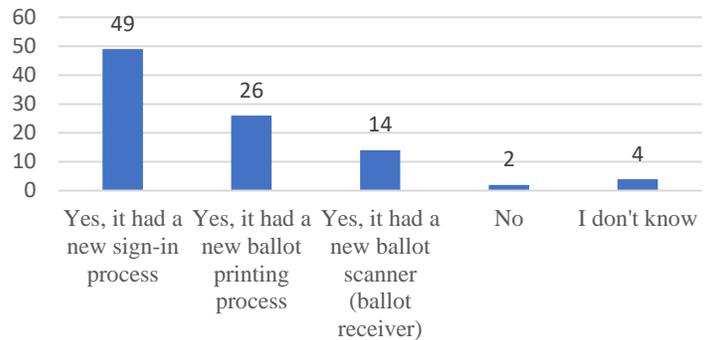
How did you learn about early voting? (Central New York)



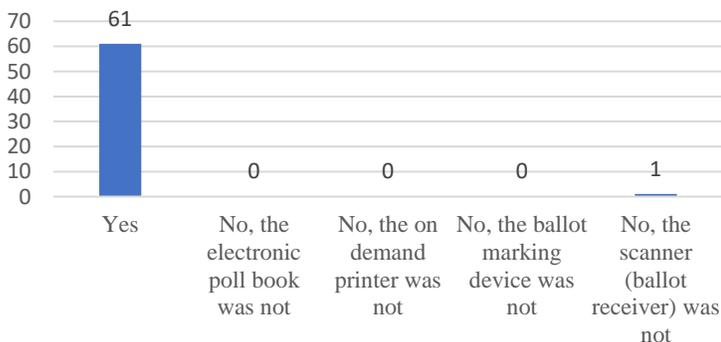
How long did you wait to vote? (Central New York)



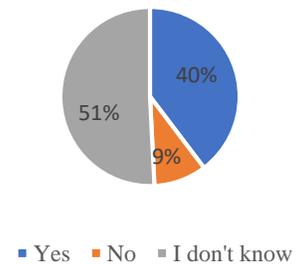
Did your polling site have new technology? (Central New York)

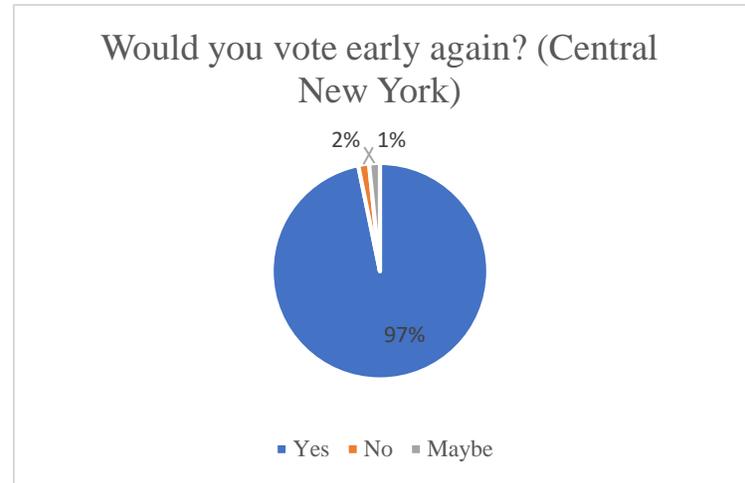
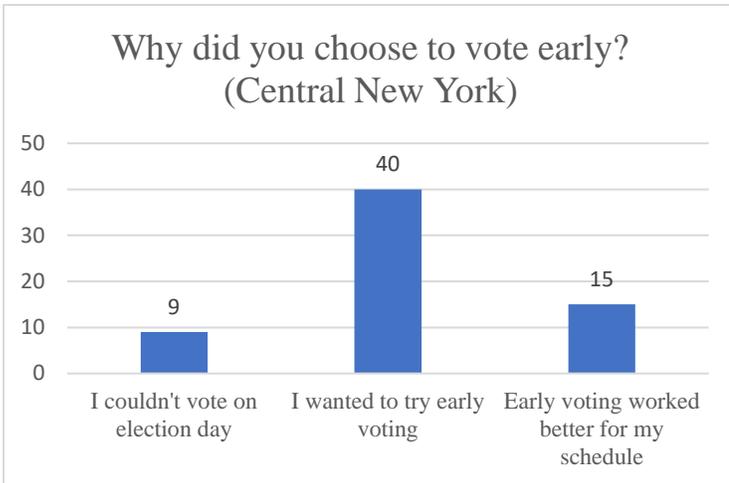


Was all the equipment working properly? (Central New York)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Central New York)





Notable Comments from Central New York Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- It could have been better if I didn't have to travel to Bath from Corning. (Oneida, Boehlert Center at Union Station)
- The nearest early voting venue was over ten miles from my home. Too far. (Oneida, Boehlert Center at Union Station)
- The southwest portion of the county was denied the opportunity to participate closer to home. (Onondaga, Van Buren Town Hall)

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- I was concerned because the inspectors were requesting IDs of the voters. When I challenged this, they said that scanning a driver's license was easier than looking people up. I did not show my ID when asked, and the inspector quickly found me in the listing. (Onondaga, Armond Magnarelli Community Center at McChesney Park)
- My wife and I arrived 4 minutes early and, in that time we were waiting, the attendant whose job it was to assist in sliding the ballots into the receiver was loudly voicing partisan political opinions. (Oswego, Oswego County Board of Elections)

On Signage and Outreach:

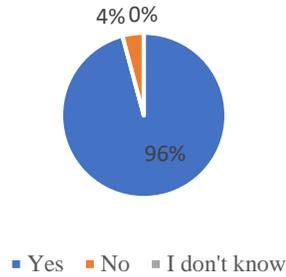
- Put a sign on the front door of Union Station alerting people to go to the 3rd floor (which was handicap accessible) to vote. knew where to go but others might forget. (Oneida, New Hartford Town Hall)
- More Advertisement through the Board of Elections about Early Voting and More Public Service Announcements to help the Grassroots' Organizations such as Onondaga Votes, Hope Organization and Other Community Groups. (Onondaga, Southwest Community Center)

VII. Northern New York Results

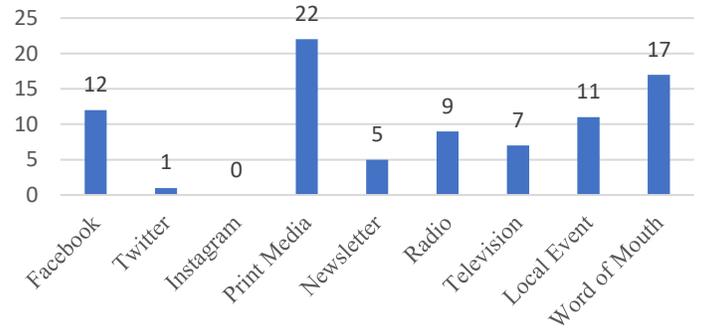
Total Northern New York Survey Responses: 45

Counties Included: Clinton, Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, Franklin, St Lawrence, Warren

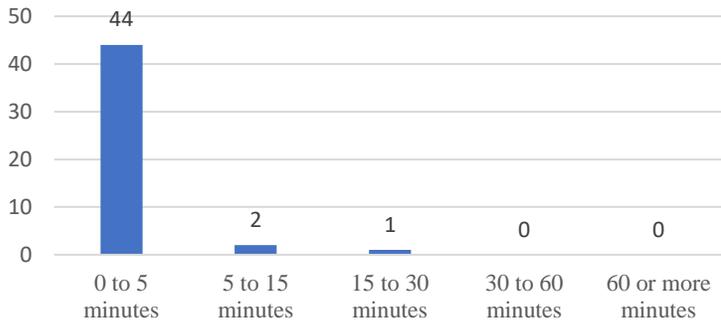
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Northern New York)



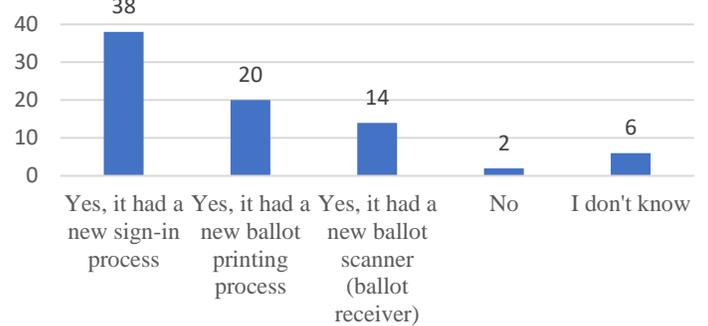
How did you learn about early voting? (Northern New York)



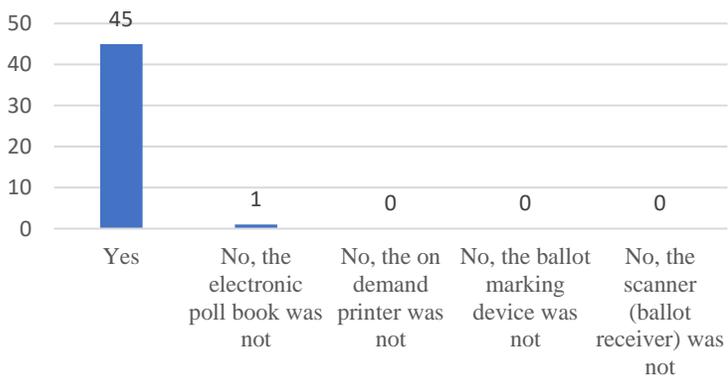
How long did you wait to vote? (Northern New York)



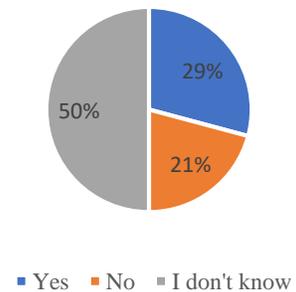
Did your polling site have new technology? (Northern New York)

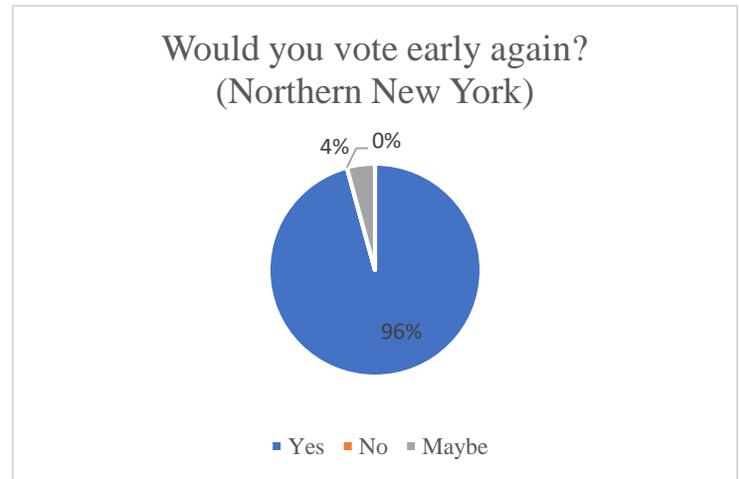
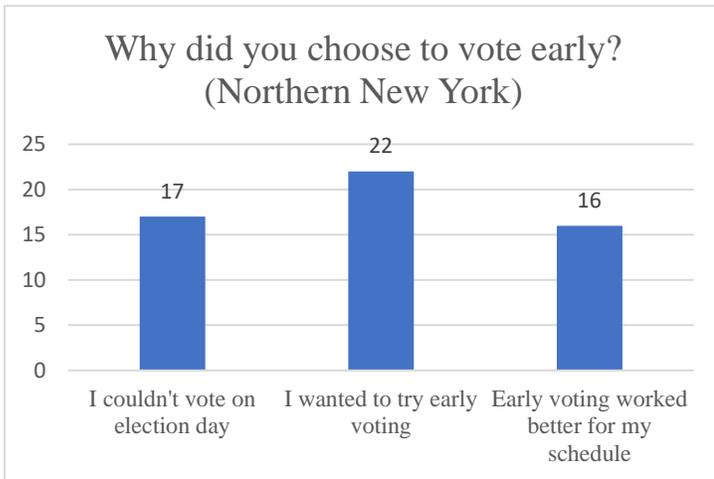


Was all the equipment working properly? (Northern New York)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Northern New York)





Notable Comments from Northern New York Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- Need better public transportation to poll sites. (Fulton, Fulton County Board of Elections)
- For some in our county having a second polling place would be very helpful. The largest population center is the city of Massena, not Canton. (St. Lawrence, St. Lawrence County Board of Elections)
- The county BOE was convenient for me, but not for most of the county. Need more distributed early voting sites. (St. Lawrence, St. Lawrence County Board of Elections)
- I live in Canton, so the BOE was convenient. However we are a large county and more early voting sites are needed to give most people a real choice to vote early. (St. Lawrence, St. Lawrence County Board of Elections)

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- Good but tentative. The woman identifying my registration said she is a poor typist. This was true but it more training might be useful. (Clinton, Clinton County Government Center)
- The electronic poll book relied on a signature made with a stylus on an electronic screen instead of signing on a paper book. That's fine if it's being compared against a signature made on an electronic screen, but it's not. I had to make more than one attempt to make my legitimate signature on the electronic surface look enough like my paper signature. (St. Lawrence, St. Lawrence County Board of Elections)

On Signage and Outreach:

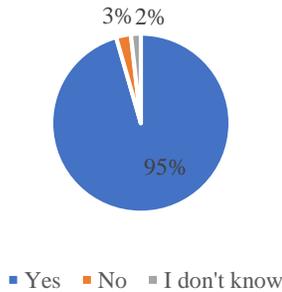
- The newspaper I looked at for the schedule didn't list any times for 10/29, so I assumed the poll site wasn't open that day. As it turned out, there was an error in the article, but consistent hours across all days would have eliminated the possibility of that error. (St. Lawrence, St. Lawrence County Board of Elections)
- I was not familiar with where the BOE was so it took me a while to locate County buildings. Once in correct area, a sign directed me to building. Maybe have signs on route 9 coming off the Northway. (Warren, Warren County Board of Elections)

VIII. Southern Tier Results

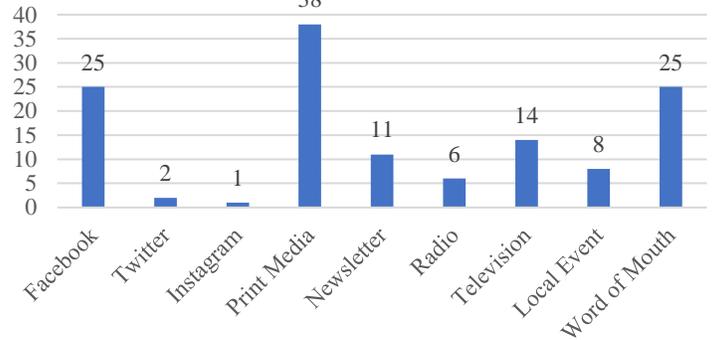
Total Southern Tier Survey Responses: 112

Counties Included: Broome, Chemung, Cortland, Delaware, Madison, Otsego, Tompkins

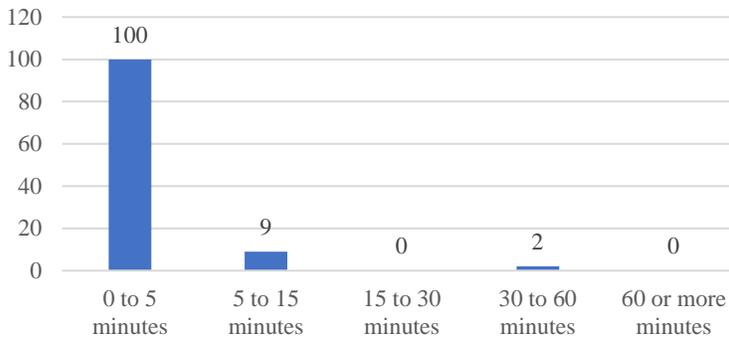
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Southern Tier)



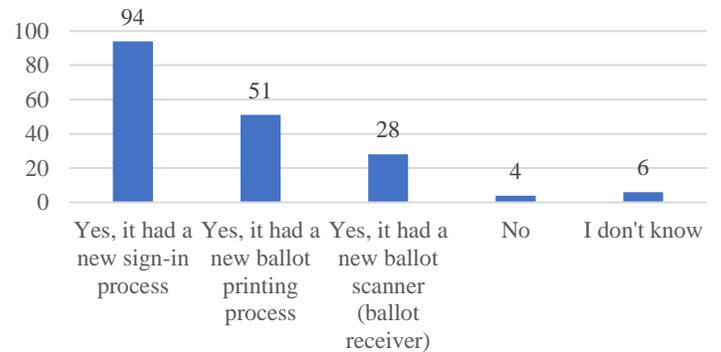
How did you learn about early voting? (Southern Tier)



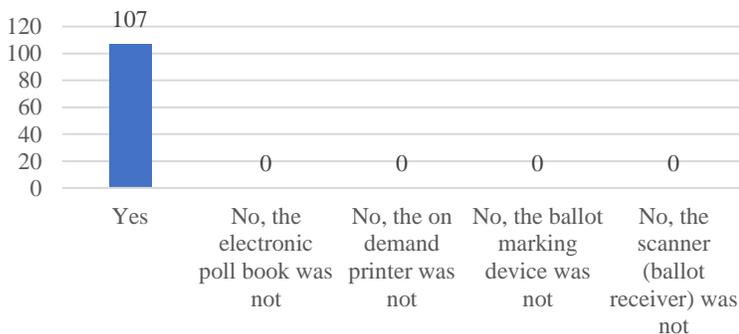
How long did you wait to vote? (Southern Tier)



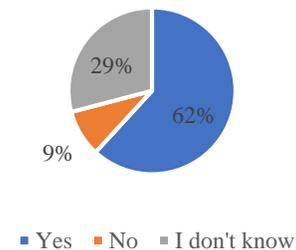
Did your polling site have new technology? (Southern Tier)

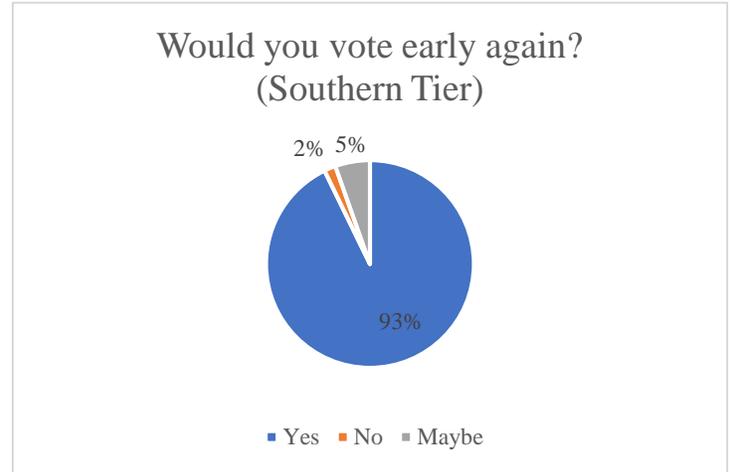
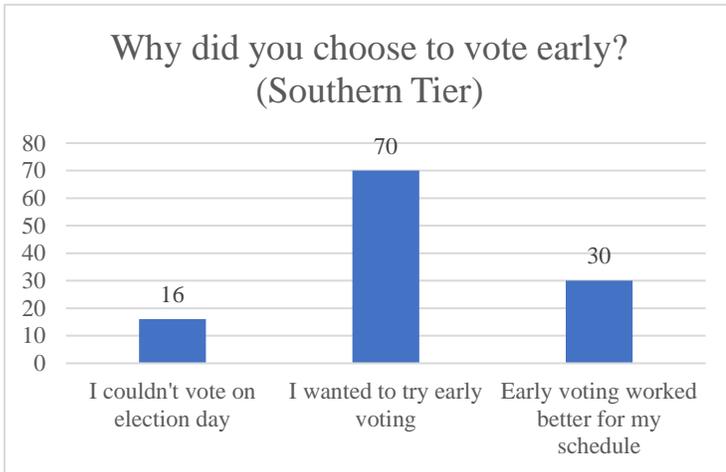


Was all the equipment working properly? (Southern Tier)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Southern Tier)





Notable Comments from Northern New York Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- Additional polling places for those of us like me who have difficulty in walking etc. (Broome, Broome County Public Library)
- All early voting sites were within the triple cities with Deposit and Whitney Point residents needing to travel long distance (Broome, Oakdale Mall)
- The only thing I can think of is something closer to home would be more convenient. (Otsego, Meadows Office Complex)
- I hope that the county can afford to bring it to Oneonta for the residents of the southern part of the county. (Otsego, Meadows Office Complex)
- Location was the only issue. But I don't think in a rural county, that could be improved. There were about 14 poll workers on site. (Otsego, Meadows Office Complex)
- Location doesn't have the greatest parking - it didn't affect me as I was there early, but it could discourage others. (Tompkins, Crash and Fire Rescue Building)

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- Nothing really, except make sure that employees don't ask for ID first thing, just to make their job easier. Some potential voters might misunderstand and think if they don't have the right ID, or can't find it, they cannot vote. (Tompkins, Town of Ithaca Town Hall)
- My experience was fine, however, I asked about a sign posted on the door showing what ID would make the process quicker/more efficient. Of course, they said ID isn't required, but I thought some voters would think they needed ID to vote. (Tompkins, Crash and Fire Rescue Building)

On Signage and Outreach:

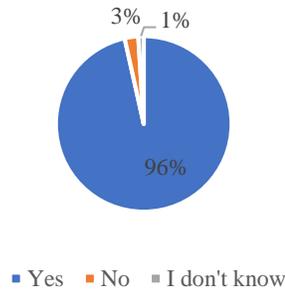
- Outside signage could have been more obvious. I think there were more campaign signs at the main entrance (from the main road) than there were directional signs to funnel voters to the correct outside entrance. (Otsego, Meadows Office Complex)
- Very poor signage at this site. I had many friends say they wandered around for 15 minutes before they found the actual building and the correct door. (Otsego, Meadows Office Complex)

IX. Finger Lakes

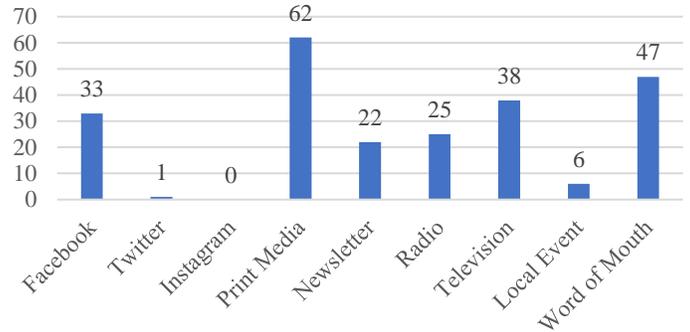
Total Finger Lakes Survey Responses: 202

Counties included: Cayuga, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne

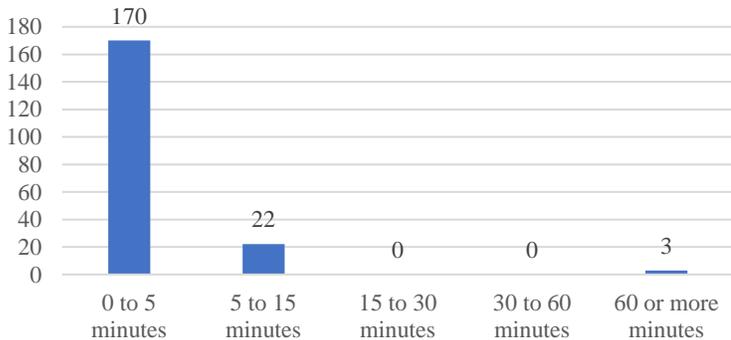
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Finger Lakes)



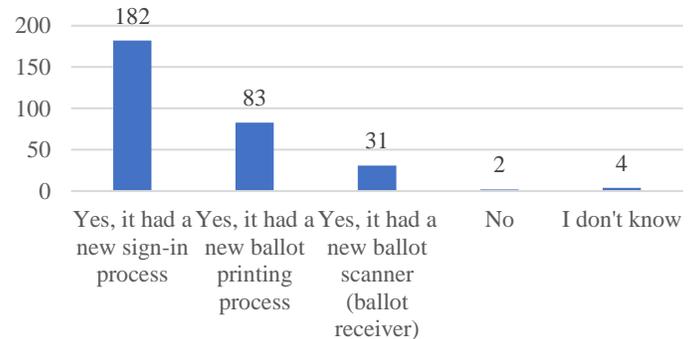
How did you learn about early voting? (Finger Lakes)



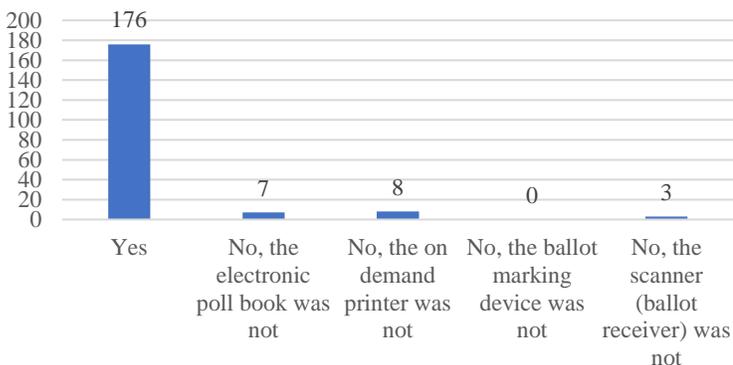
How long did you wait to vote? (Finger Lakes)



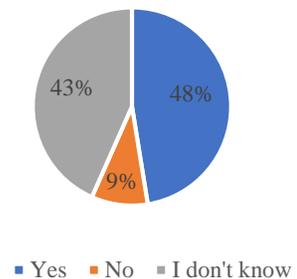
Did your polling site have new technology? (Finger Lakes)

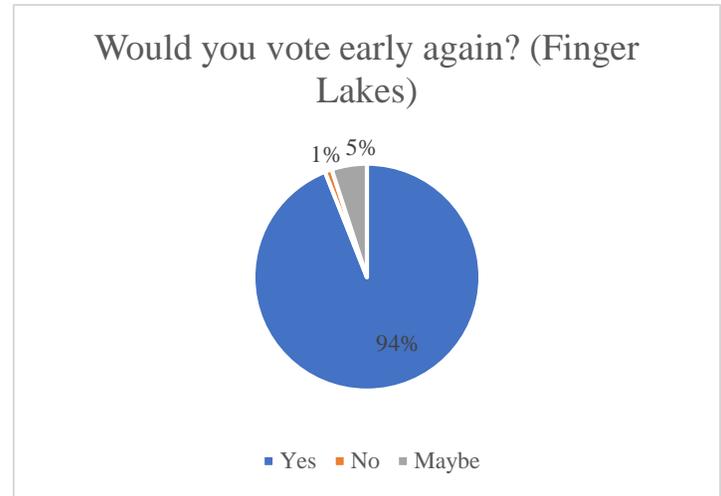
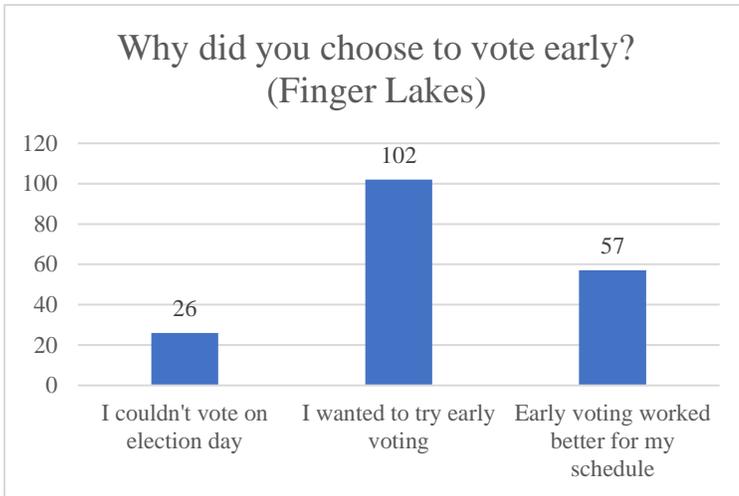


Was all the equipment working properly? (Finger Lakes)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Finger Lakes)





Notable Comments from Finger Lakes Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- Monroe County has only 7 locations, it would be better (particularly for those without cars) with more locations. (Monroe, Marketplace Mall)
- Polls didn't open until 1pm Sunday, which wasn't super convenient. If they had opened at noon that would have worked better for us. (Monroe, Marketplace Mall)
- Ballot marking area felt very cramped. Larger tables needed. (Monroe, Marketplace Mall)
- To vote early, I would have to walk the 2 blocks to the bus stop opposite my regular polling place, take the bus downtown, transfer to the early voting place, wait in line, then do the same to get back home--around 1.5 hrs. Several locations are easily accessible by bus; not complaining about that. But, easier for me to just vote on election day. (Monroe)

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- The location was so overstaffed, it seemed wasteful. Even for a busier election I don't think they'd need that many workers. Also they had so many ballot printers they had to run a gas generator outside to power them, not great for the air quality on the street. (Livingston, Livingston County Government Building)
- Two poll workers entered their names at the same time, and since it is the same address, there was a snafu with the issuance of a ballot. It took about 20 minutes to straighten it all out. (Monroe, MCC Downtown Campus)
- Overall, my experience was good; however my signature was not in the system to verify (even though I have voted in at least the last 6 elections). (Monroe, SUNY Empire State College)
- My signature could not be verified on the electronic pad -- 4 different times! There was lots of staff trying to figure out why this was happening - and finally one of the supervisors worked through the system to get my printout for the appropriate ballot. Most voters were in and out within minutes. (Monroe, Ridge Culver Plaza)

- All went reasonably well, although had to sign in twice and also feed ballot twice. (Monroe, MCC Downtown Campus)
- It went smoothly for me, but I know that some sign-in systems were down and some workers seemed confused and uncertain about the sign in process. (Monroe, Penfield Town Hall)
- There were so many people just sitting around. It seemed like too much. (Monroe, Penfield Town Hall)
- Problem was really with link from Ipad - printer, maybe even more central-printer was working. (Monroe, Marketplace Mall)
- Only 1 of 3 printers were working when I arrived, but that stopped working when I was near the head of the line-standstill. That printer was filled-didn't look like trying to fix other 2, so a wait for your ballot to come out. (Monroe, Marketplace Mall)
- There were many polling place attendants and only one technician for the equipment. There were setups for 5 lines and 5 printers. Only 2 printers were functional when I arrived and one of those went down while I waited. The polling attendants did not know why 5 lines were not formed, only a few were aware that all the printers were not working. (Monroe, Penfield Town Hall)
- WiFi was acting up to bring up my voting record. It took a few minutes to get it working. (Wayne, Wayne County Public Safety Building)
- Printer wasn't connecting to the network correctly at first. (Wayne, Wayne County Public Safety Building)
- Still skeptical about how good an ID check a signature on an iPad is - use of stylus does make it somewhat legible. (Monroe, Empire State College)

On Signage and Outreach:

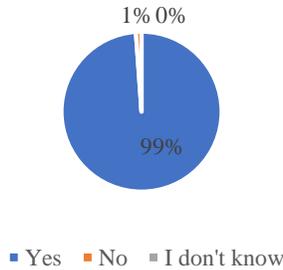
- Signage could have been better outside the mall and at the wings of the mall. Signs at every entrance to the mall property & at the head of every wing of the mall. A sign with all sites & times listed, at the polling site, could be useful. (Monroe, Marketplace Mall)
- Until last week, location in mall wasn't listed on County BoE website. (Monroe, Marketplace Mall)

X. Western New York

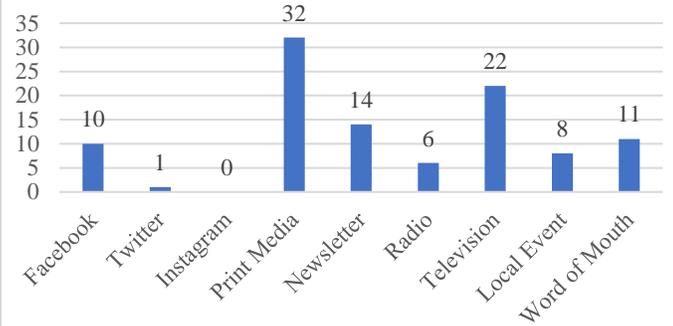
Total Western New York Survey Responses: 89

Counties included: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genessee, Niagara

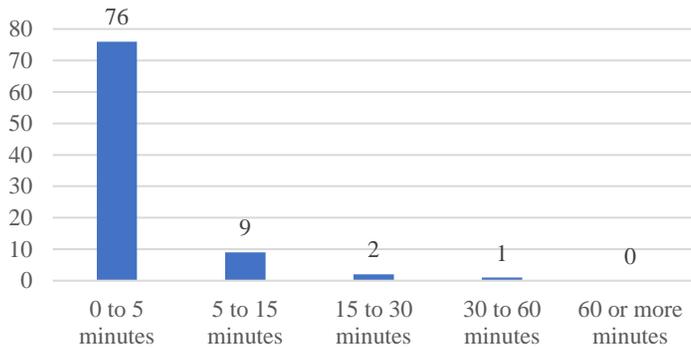
Were you able to find information about your early voting site easily? (Western New York)



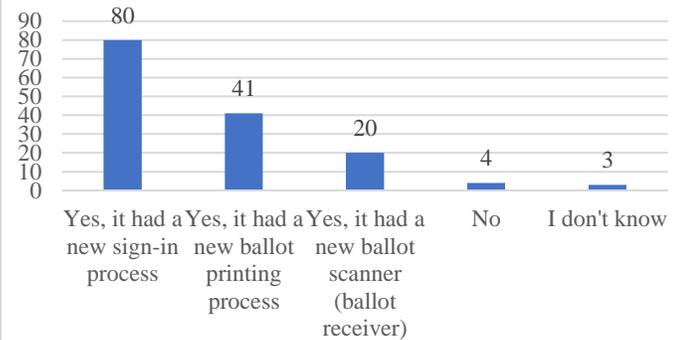
How did you learn about early voting? (Western New York)



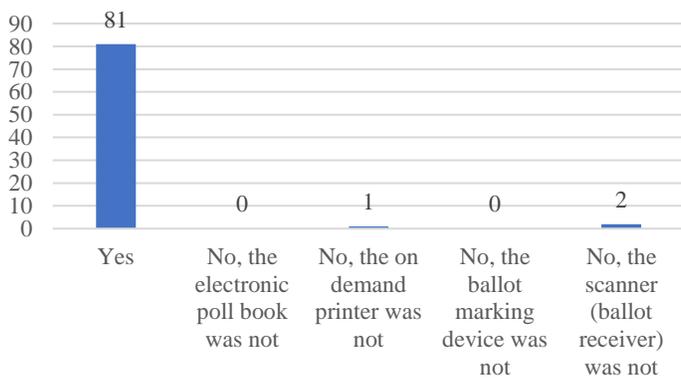
How long did you wait to vote? (Western New York)



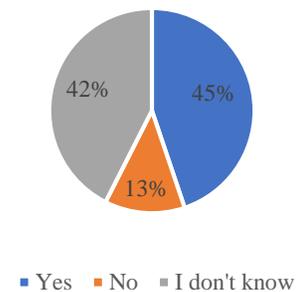
Did your polling site have new technology? (Western New York)

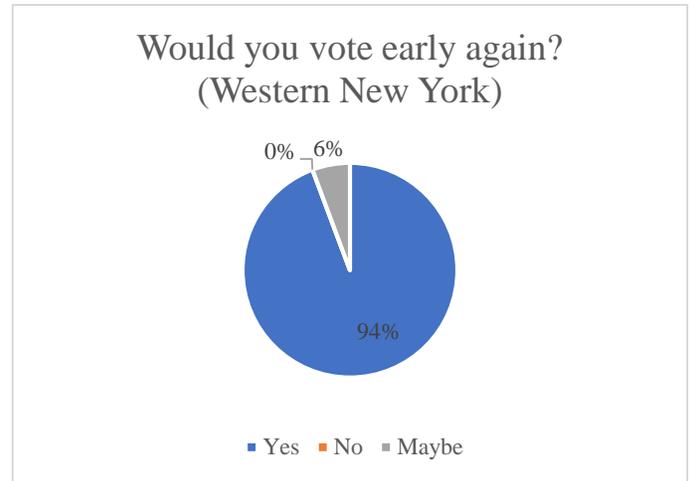
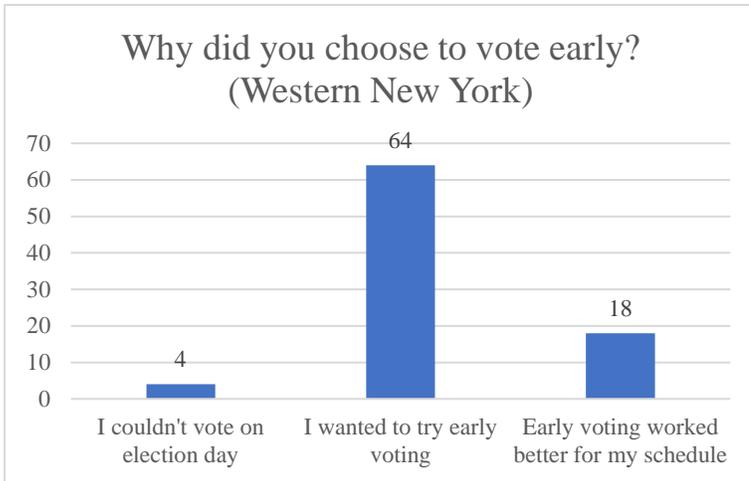


Was all the equipment working properly? (Western New York)



Was this poll site easily accessible by public transportation? (Western New York)





Notable Comments from Western New York Voters

On Location and Accessibility:

- Would want another polling places in Amherst. The Harlem Road Community Center is the only one. (Erie, Grand Island Town Hall)
- It should be in a bigger room that offers more privacy. (Erie, Moose Lodge 992)
- I hope the room at the Lancaster Town Hall can be rearranged to provide more privacy for voters. (Erie, Lancaster Town Hall)
- The room used was fairly small. Less than ten people in the room and was feeling crowded (Erie, Harlem Rd Community Center)
- Polling place could be closer to where I live. I have transportation but there is no public transportation in county due to its rural nature. (Genesee, County Building 2)
-

On Equipment and Poll Workers:

- I was a little confused why the Voting Machine showed on the Screen who I voted for in the State Judicial section. As an Elections inspector, I was concerned about the PEN used to sign in as many of the E Systems, the Signature does not look the same. I would like to see a system that says if the signature was the same as in the Book. (Cattaraugus, Cattaraugus County Board of Elections)
- It seemed that there were more people working than needed to me. Not sure though who was getting paid and who was not. (Erie, Salvation Army West Side Community Center)

On Signage and Outreach:

- There could have been more signs, along the street and facing the street. (Erie, The Belle Center)