

OKLAHOMA VOTES:

IMPROVING THE ELECTION PROCESS, VOTER ACCESS & INFORMED VOTER ENGAGEMENT
2017 TOWN HALL LISTENING SESSIONS RESULTS



In an attempt to provide a voice to Oklahomans who were unable to attend this Town Hall and to provide additional insight for those who attended the 2017 Town Hall, the Oklahoma Academy staff conducted a series of listening sessions across the State. In total, 476 individuals completed the listening session survey. Participants were asked to list the top three barriers and solutions in three categories: the election process, voter access, and voter engagement. With help from area chambers, rotaries, universities, Latino Community Development Agency, OKC Urban League, League of Women Voters, Academy members, and citizens, we were able to visit 24 locations across the state starting in April and concluding the project in August. We shared the results with the Town Hall attendees in October.

24 Listening Sessions Held

216 REPUBLICAN
204 DEMOCRAT
40 INDEPENDENT/LIBERTARIAN

260 MALES
201 FEMALES
15 DID NOT ANSWER

95% VOTED IN THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

OVERALL TOP 3 BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS

Top 3 Barriers for the Election Process: Wording of SQs too complicated, Length of campaigns/too many campaigns, & Straight party voting.

Top 3 Solutions for the Election Process: Open Primaries, Nonpartisan group to review SQs, & Registration automatic with Driver's License or state issue ID, online registration.

Top 3 Barriers for Voter Access: Lack of transportation, Voter ID Issues, & Limited sites and times for early voting.

Top 3 Solutions for Voter Access: More early voting sites, Online voting and/or mail-in voting without notarization, and Free public transportation on election day.

Top 3 Barriers for Voter Engagement: Lack of unbiased information concerning candidates & issues, Overall apathy/belief vote doesn't count, & Awareness of non-November elections.

Top 3 Solutions for Voter Engagement: Require K-12 Civics education in public schools, Central location for unbiased information, & Open Primaries.

For the complete report, compiled by Dr. Tracy Morris, Roberta Botello, Tu Doan, and Gabriella Oliver of the University of Central Oklahoma please visit our library tab on our website. www.okacademy.org

REGIONAL RESPONSES

NORTHEASTERN REGION

- Top 3 barriers for election process: Wording of SQs too complicated, & Straight party voting, Open primaries.
- Top 3 solutions for election process: Open primaries, Voter Registration automatic when getting DL or State Issue ID, & Independent Review of wording and provides understandable wording of SQs that the public can understand.
- Top 3 barriers for voter access: Limited polling sites and times, Transportation availability, & Polling locations.
- Top 3 solutions for voter access: Early Voting, Open primaries, & Free public transportation on election day.
- Top 3 barriers for voter engagement: Belief vote doesn't count, Lack of reliable data, & Media bias.
- Top 3 solutions for voter engagement: Require Civics education in K-12 schools, Open primaries (tied) & Provide a central location for unbiased nonpartisan information on issues, SQs, and candidates.

NORTHWESTERN REGION

- Top barrier for election process: Wording of SQs too complicated.
- Top 3 solutions for election process: Open primaries, Shorten the campaign/election cycle, & Voter Registration automatic when getting DL or State Issue ID.
- Top 2 barriers for voter access: Transportation availability, & Long lines.
- Top 3 solutions for voter access: Early Voting, Online voting, & Free public transportation on election day.
- Top 2 barriers for voter engagement: Belief vote doesn't count, Overall apathy towards issues/going to vote.
- Top 3 solutions for voter engagement: Provide a central location for unbiased nonpartisan information on issues, SQs, and candidates, Require Civics education in K-12 schools, & Open primaries.

OKLAHOMA CITY AREA METRO REGION

- Top 3 barriers for election process: Districts (gerrymandering), Wording of SQs too complicated, & Open primaries.
- Top 3 solutions for election process: Independent Review of wording and provides understandable wording of SQs that the public can understand, Open primaries, & Online Voting.
- Top 3 barriers for voter access: Online/Mail-In Voting, Voting times and day, & Requirement of a Notary for absentee.
- Top 3 solutions for voter access: Online Voting, Early Voting, & Open primaries.
- Top 3 barriers for voter engagement: Belief vote doesn't count (tied), Overall apathy toward societal issues/going to vote (tied), & Education of populace.
- Top 3 solutions for voter engagement: Require Civics education in K-12 schools, Provide a central location for unbiased nonpartisan information on issues, SQs, and candidates, & Open primaries.

SOUTHEASTERN REGION

- Top 3 barriers for election process: Straight party voting, Wording of SQs too complicated, & Open primaries.
- Top 3 solutions for election process: Open primaries (tied), Independent Review of wording and provides understandable wording of SQs that the public can understand. (tied) & Cap candidate spending for state-wide offices.
- Top 3 barriers for voter access: Limited polling sites and times, Voter ID issues (name changes, restrictions) (tied), & Long lines at the polls(tied).
- Top 3 solutions for voter access: Early Voting, Open primaries, & Free public transportation on election day.
- Top 3 barriers for voter engagement: Overall apathy for societal issues/voting in general, Awareness of non-November elections, & Belief that vote doesn't count.
- Top 3 solutions for voter engagement: Require Civics education in K-12 schools, Open primaries, & Provide a central location for unbiased nonpartisan information on issues, SQs, and candidates.

SOUTHWESTERN REGION

- Top 3 barriers for election process: Open primaries, Straight party voting, & Districts (Gerrymandering).
- Top 3 solutions for election process: Open primaries (tied), Online voting (tied), & Independent Review of wording and provides understandable wording of SQs that the public can understand.
- Top 3 barriers for voter access: Online/Mail-In voting (tied), Location of polling places (tied), & Open primaries.
- Top 3 solutions for voter access: Early Voting (tied), Open primaries (tied), & Free public transportation on Election Day
- Top 2 barriers for voter engagement: Overall apathy for societal issues/voting in general, & Belief that vote doesn't count.
- Top 3 solutions for voter engagement: Provide a central location for unbiased nonpartisan information on issues, SQs, and candidates, Open primaries (tied) & Direct mail of impact the vote (tied).

TULSA METRO REGION

- Top 3 barriers for election process: Wording of SQs too complicated, Districts (Gerrymandering), & Open primaries.
- Top 3 solutions for election process: Open primaries (tied), Voter Registration done automatically when you get your DL or state issued ID (tied), & Independent Review of wording and provides understandable wording of SQs that the public can understand.
- Top 3 barriers for voter access: Long lines at the polls, Transportation availability, & Limited early voting sites/days.
- Top 3 solutions for voter access: Early Voting, Move voting days to weekends (along with keeping Tuesday restrictive), & Online voting.
- Top 3 barriers for voter engagement: Belief that vote doesn't count, Overall apathy for societal issues/voting in general, & Lack of reliable and unbiased data to understand candidates and issues.
- Top 3 solutions for voter engagement: Provide a central location for unbiased nonpartisan information on issues, SQs, and candidates, Open primaries, & Require Civics Education to be taught in our K-12 public schools.