Evaluating Elections: A Data Driven Performance Based Approach

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Election Evaluation

• Data that is already produced during the election process
• Data that is especially generated for the purpose of examining the election process
How We Measure?

Against Fixed Standard?
**How We Measure?**

Against Fixed Standard?
How We Measure?

Against Multiple Standards?

Compared to Other Jurisdictions in State

Compared to Other Jurisdiction Outside of State

Compared to Last Election
Key Linkage:

Data From Last Election For Comparison to This Election

Where Were Problems?

What Changed?

Progress to Benchmark
Tools For Evaluation

• Surveys
• Focus Groups
• Interviews
• Structured Observer Data
• Audit and Management Data
• Document Reviews (e.g., Legal Code)
• Forensic Analysis
Example of Bernalillo County

• In depth examination of BC since 2006
• Strong partnership/Goals
  – Improving the election ecosystem through a systematic look at data
    • Data driven approach to election reform and election management
## Improvements through the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Evaluation Team</th>
<th>Bernalillo County</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop measures of evaluation of each VCC/polling location across a variety of dimensions and actors</td>
<td>Better training of poll workers (Hands on, scenario based, specific job duties, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre and Post Election Surveys of poll workers – perceptions of training before and after</td>
<td>Move to VCC allows better oversight of PW, better locations, create better flow</td>
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<td>Linkage of poll worker, voter and observation monitoring data</td>
<td>Follow the data (test equipment, work with vendors, calculate the data, reflect, change accordingly)</td>
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<td>Measure voter reactions to change</td>
<td>Innovate, adapt, (improvement in consistency of applications of laws and rules, online training, design polling locations)</td>
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<td>Think about the system, what needs to be changed/cleaned up at the state level, local level</td>
<td>Use the data gathered to improve to advocate for policy change, Clean Up Election Bill, at all levels</td>
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OPERATIONALIZING RESEARCH

DEFINITION ISSUE

• What is ballot secrecy?
• Defined in law?
• Defined by custom or experience?
• Training and education issue?

How Do we Measure It?

• Voter Surveys
• Poll Worker Surveys
  Observer Experience
• Procedural Requirements
• Legal Requirements
New Mexico Example

• 2008
  • Paper Ballot Problem
    – No Privacy Sleeve
  • Not a Legal Problem
  • Problem Identified by Observation
  • Problem Cause: Innovation/Technology

• 2012
  • No Paper Ballot Problem
    – Sleeves Introduced
    – Better Training
    – Voter Education
Compared to 2012

2012
• Only 48% of VCCs used privacy sleeve

2014
• We observed 93% of VCCs use privacy sleeve
• 88% of poll workers indicated they offered it to voters very often
• 70% of voters felt that the privacy sleeve enhanced their overall privacy
Voter Confidence Over Time

**% Very Confident Bernalillo County**

- **Y-axis:** Percentage
- **Legend:**
  - Very Confident

The graph shows the percentage of voters who are very confident in the Bernalillo County elections over the years from 2006 to 2014. The confidence level increased from 2006 to 2010, then decreased slightly until 2012, and showed a significant increase from 2012 to 2014.
Data

• Data is key to assess the democratic process
• Election reforms should be based upon facts and evidence
• Data should be used to evaluate the election ecosystem
Goal

- Goal is systematic study of election to improve the mechanics, administration and implementation of our democracy
Let’s turn to Maggie and Pam