



GIBSON COUNTY'S ELECTION LEARNING LAB

Leather Chavis
Project Completed January 2025

Gibson County

lchavis@gibsoncounty-in.gov



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Project Goals	4
Methods.....	5
Survey Data	6
CEATS Principles & Tools.....	7
Conclusion	8
Acknowledgements.....	9

INTRODUCTION

Poll workers are the key to administering a successful Election Day. We need them to be comfortable, confident, and knowledgeable to perform their responsibilities accurately. They need from the county level, clear, organized hands-on training that presents real-life scenarios to prepare them for Election Day.

Voters are equally important to our elections, but voting can be intimidating, discouraging them from choosing to vote. We need our voters to be confident when it is time to cast their ballot. Enabling voters to practice voting increases their comfort and confidence, making Election Day easier to conquer.

Poll workers and voters are two important factors when we discuss elections. They need to be confident in their responsibilities, whether administering their precinct or electing their future leaders. Creating a hands-on learning lab will allow our poll workers to gain confidence in their Election Day jobs and help eliminate the recurring errors we often encounter. Voters utilizing the lab will become comfortable and confident when entering the polls to vote.

PROJECT GOALS

Creating a hands-on learning lab gives our poll workers and voters the freedom and responsibility to learn through real experience rather than reading or listening to a lecture. Poll workers can engage with each other, experience the voting systems, and walk through Election Day scenarios to boost their confidence when it is time to perform their election responsibilities. Voters who are anxious about voting will be able to interact with our voting systems and become comfortable with the voting process in Gibson County to increase their confidence.

METHODS

- ✓ The Learning Lab was fully functional as a mock precinct and ready for participants mid-September.
- ✓ Flyers were created to reflect the days and times the Learning Lab was open, including contact information to RSVP. These were displayed on local bulletin boards and given to each poll worker on their scheduled training day.
- ✓ Six lab sessions were scheduled for October 2024 with a total of 27 participants.
- ✓ Surveys were sent out to all participants that experienced the Learning Lab. A total of six questions were about the content provided, format of the lab, preparation for Election Day, what was most helpful and if they had any questions that may not have been answered during their session. The survey concluded with a comment section for the participants to provide any additional feedback they wanted to include.
- ✓ Reviewing each participant's survey answers provided me with information to assess the Learning Lab. Using their responses allowed me to view the lab from their positions and gather what worked well and where improvement was needed to improve their experience in the Learning Lab.
- ✓ At the conclusion of Election Day, we send out post-election surveys to all poll workers. I focused on the surveys from the participants that utilized the learning lab. The information provided in these surveys was key in determining the confidence and knowledge of those select poll workers gained from the Learning Lab.

SURVEY DATA

- ✓ **How would you rate the content of this training? (topics covered, clarity of materials, etc.)**
 - Majority of the participants answered that it was paced accordingly and clearly understood. A handful responded that the training was unclear and rushed
- ✓ **How would you rate the format of the training? (session length, interactivity, ect.)**
 - All participants, apart from one, gave a 10/10.
 - One felt it should be broken up into sections with more time to process the information
- ✓ **How would you rate the delivery of the training? (energy, pacing, ability to follow, etc.)**
 - The bulk of the respondents felt the pace was easy to follow along
 - Four of the participants felt at times, delivery was rushed
- ✓ **How prepared do you feel about Election Day after receiving training?**
 - Half of the poll workers felt well prepared
 - Half felt another session would be beneficial
- ✓ **What aspects of training did you find most helpful?**
 - Everyone felt the Learning Lab was the most helpful aspect
- ✓ **What additional questions do you have that were not answered during the training?**
 - No additional questions were asked from the respondents

CEATS PRINCIPLES & TOOLS

Voting machines and electronic poll books were the most important tools in the Learning Lab. These two components were the main sources within the Learning Lab that allowed our poll workers to have hands-on experience using this equipment.



The process of elections was an essential principle to the Learning Lab. Demonstrating how the election process flows for our county provided understanding to the poll workers on the who, what, when, where and why when it came to allocating Election Day.



Organization and management of files gave me the direction I needed when it came to creating outreach for the Learning Lab. Managing the lab schedule, calendar and content flyers made it simple when using the organizational tools provided by CEATS.







CONCLUSION

In conclusion, poll workers and voters are essential in achieving a successful election. Ensuring both roles have the confidence and knowledge needed as they approach the responsibilities within the polls is a necessity. Providing our citizens and election officials with hands-on experience in a relaxed atmosphere created a confident voter and assisted in eliminating reoccurring poll worker errors.

Poll workers that utilized the lab commented that it provided them with clear knowledge on the election process, confidence for their precinct roles, and comfort in assisting the voters of Gibson County. Post-election assessments showed that the precincts occupied by the poll workers that engaged in the Learning Lab had fewer reoccurring problems on Election Day.

The launch of the Gibson County Learning Lab during the 2024 Presidential Election was rewarding within Gibson County and primarily used by our poll workers. Going into the 2026 election cycle I am choosing to prioritize the voters and allow them to engage in the Learning Lab. This lab will be an asset to Gibson County once it is known and established throughout the public.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

-  I cannot thank my Clerk, Sherri Smith, enough. She approved my proposal and continued supporting my thoughts and ideas throughout the creation of the Learning Lab.
-  Kellie Landers, my co-worker and brainstorming partner, I appreciate your opinions, advice, and patience as I continuously brought my thoughts and ideas to you. She also created the surveys that were used to obtain the data for the lab and completed it willingly.
-  Much appreciation to our County Commissioners for allowing me to utilize a vacant room within the basement of the annex that stores our election equipment, to house the Learning Lab.
-  Ross Roberson at Harp Enterprises, beyond thankful for his guidance on setting up a mock election on our voting systems. He provided training ballots for the Learning Lab so our users could get the full effect of an election.
-  Andy Schafer and Greg Bruce, our maintenance director and custodian lead, for moving heavy cabinets and cleaning the vacant room to be ready for the setting up of the lab.
-  Last but certainly not least, the Gibson County Learning Lab would not have been a success if it weren't for the participants that utilized the lab. Thank you for trusting me to provide you with the experience and training to obtain the knowledge and confidence to conquer Election Day.