Understanding Voter Suppression as We Get Ready for 2024

Presenters:
Carol Schnaiter: schnaitercarol@gmail.com
Diane Chapman: dianchap@att.net
Session Objectives

By the end of this session participants will:

• Recognize and understand the well-coordinated nation-wide groups who threaten our voting rights by using the historical and up-to-the-moment data and information shared by the presenters and others in group discussions.
• Use advocacy strategies to effectively share information about all aspects of voting and about the groups who threaten our voting rights with their state and local affiliate members, family/friends, and their community
• Create and share a voting plan with their local affiliate members
Why is the Right to Vote so Important?

“Voting is an act of faith. It’s profound. In a democracy it is the ultimate power. Through the vote, the poor can access financial means, the infirm can find healthcare supports, and the burdened and heavy-laden can receive a measure of relief from a social safety net that serves all. And we are willing to go to war to defend the sacred.”

Stacey Abrams, Our Time is Now. p.7
Voter Suppression Defined

**Voter suppression**: “Any legal or extralegal measure or strategy whose purpose of practical effect is to reduce voting, or registering to vote, by members of a targeted racial group, political party, or religious community.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*

**18 U.S. Code § 594 - Intimidation of voters**

Whoever intimidates, threatens, coerces, or attempts to intimidate, threaten, or coerce, any other person for the purpose of interfering with the right of such other person to vote or to vote as he may choose, or of causing such other person to vote for, or not to vote for, any candidate for the office of President, Vice President, Presidential elector, Member of the Senate, Member of the House of Representatives, Delegate from the District of Columbia, or Resident Commissioner, at any election held solely or in part for the purpose of electing such candidate, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

A Voting Timeline of the U.S.

Moving Forward
1789:  The U.S. Constitution gave the states the right to set the requirements for voting
1868:  14th amendment
1870:  15th Amendment
1876:  Reconstruction Act of 1876
1876:  14th amendment
1876:  15th Amendment
1882:  Protection added to the 1965 VRA
1890:  Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965
1913:  17th Amendment
1920:  19th Amendment
1961:  23rd Amendment
1964:  24th Amendment
1964:  Civil Rights Act of 1964
1965:  Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965
1971:  26th Amendment
1975:  Protection added to the 1965 VRA
1993:  Voter Registration Act
2002:  Help America Vote Act
2023:  Allen v Milligan

Moving Backward
1790:  Naturalization Act of 1790
1857:  Dred Scot v. Sanford
1860:  Black Codes
1882:  Chinese Exclusion Act
1890:  Mississippi Plan of 1890
1913:  California Alien Land Law
2013:  Shelby County v. Holder
2021:  Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee
Voter Turnout Increased in 2022

• Expanded safe and secure access to voting
• Additional resources given to counties with monetary needs
• Expanded vote by mail
• Increased ballot to drop boxes

• These resulted in increased voter turn out of
• BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of color)
• Low-income people
• Students
• Others who were previously had difficulty accessing the ability to vote.
Examples of Voter Suppression

- Voter roll purges
- Limiting access to voter registration
- Eliminating third party voter registration
- Strict voter ID laws and requiring addresses
- Limiting dates and times for early voting
- Limiting access to vote by mail
- Limiting the number of drop boxes for vote by mail
- Limiting Sunday voting

- Closed precincts
- Changing the location of precincts
- Too few ballots and poll workers purposely at precincts
- Exact match of signatures
- Broken voting machines
- Running out of ballots
- Opening polls late to cause long voting lines
- Making it illegal to provide food/water to those waiting in long lines
When Theresa Burroughs (1929-2019) came of voting age, she was ready to cast her ballot, but she had a long fight ahead of her. During the Jim Crow era, the board of registrars at Alabama’s Hale County Courthouse prevented African Americans from registering to vote. Undeterred, Theresa remembers venturing to the courthouse on the first and third Monday of each month, in pursuit of her right to vote.

The Rauch Brothers Animations.
Eleven States That Enacted Restrictive Voting Laws in 2023
New After the 2022 Election

New negative trends in 2023
• Legislation limiting the way voters pass ballot measures
• Criminalizing election related activities
• Creating election police units
• Limiting poll workers

Positive trends in 2023
• Improving voting procedures
• Improve voting access
• Legal protections added
Purges, Challenges, and More to Come in 2024

The Brennan Center for Justice

Georgia: S.B. 202 and Challenging Voters

Purging Of Voters

“True the Vote” Pending Lawsuit
Data on Voter Suppression

• Restrictive voting ID laws

• Accessibility

• By Race
  • Native American
  • AAPI
Gerrymandering Steps Into the Limelight

Gerrymandering:  
When a political district map is redrawn to favor one party in elections, many times to favor white voters.

• Alabama  
• Kinds of Gerrymandering  
  • Political  
  • Prison  
  • Age  
  • Racial

Examples of how gerrymandering affects people other than in just one election  
• A state led legislature refuses to expand Medicaid to help lower income and people of color  
• The Flint Water crisis  
• States banning transgender bathrooms  
• Right to work laws enacted  
• Limiting women’s access to healthcare and abortion  
• Refusal to enact stricter gun laws  
• It impacts school board elections, city, county, and other local governing bodies elections and state legislatures  
• It’s not just impacting a congressional map or a presidential election.
In the past the vote was suppressed by using clubs, dogs, and water hoses:

In what ways is the vote being suppressed today because of implicit biases and systemic racism?
What is Voter Suppression?

PBS Video
2 min 52 seconds

https://www.pbs.org/video/what-is-voter-suppression-ahfvlx/
Undermining an Election……

Freedom to Vote Act S.B. 2747 Introduced in 2021 AND Reintroduced in 2023....
Heritage Foundation: Thoughts on Voting

1973 Paul Weyrich, Edwin Feulner, Jr and Joseph Coors - Heritage Foundation Founders

Koch Brothers
Donors Trust
Donors Capital Fund

John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act-H.R.4
Outside Groups Working to Suppress the Vote

ALEC
The Policy Network
The Koch Brothers Network
The Cato Institute
The Libre Initiative
Donors Trust/Donors Capital Fund

The Bradley Foundation
Sinclair Broadcasting
Fox News
Stand for Children
StudentsFirst
Stand Together
The Courts Weigh In

• Limiting parts of Georgia’s restrictive voting law
• Restoring voting rights in Mississippi
• Addressing the disenfranchisement of voters
  • Alabama
  • South Carolina
Empowering Our Members to Vote

• Make it personal
  o Protect public education
  o Protect our right to unionize and to collective bargain
  o Work for the common good

• Engage all demographics
• Stay informed
By Fully Participating in Voting for Public Education-Friendly Candidates...

Remember – You are

• Electing the legislators who will **represent you in your state legislature**!
• Electing your **members of Congress**!
• Electing **local officials** – your school board members!
• Voting **from the top of the ballot all the way to the bottom of the ballot to**...
  • Advocate for policies and laws that will **impact your classroom, your students, their families, and your community**!
How have you been able to engage the infrequent voter and those educators who are uninterested in political activism?
What Can I Do?

• Volunteer at a voter registration drive
• Support smart, state-level proposals that remove barriers to voting.
• Empower students to be informed voters and help eligible high school students register (edvotes.org/register-to-vote)
• When asked to, write or call your representatives to support bills for voter rights
How Can I Get Involved in the Election?

- Attend candidates’ townhalls
- Find the IPACE recommended candidates from www.ieavotes.org
- Contact the legislator for details about their campaign by visiting their website or the State Board of Elections website for the list of all campaign websites
- Participate in phone/text banking
- Participate in canvassing
- Put a sign for the candidate in your yard
- Spread the word – tell your friends and family
- Vote
Be An Ed Activist

The goal is to help educators and public education supporters connect with their communities and networks to score important wins for public schools and students.

Stay informed about actions YOU can take to protect public education and your rights as a union member.

Sign up on the NEA site: https://educationvotes.nea.org/take-action/be-an-edactivist/
Our Goal: Preserve Our Voting Rights to Protect Public Education

Create a Voting Plan

Are you registered at the address where you reside?
Do you know how/where to register to vote?

How will you vote? Early, By Mail, In-person on election day?

Do you know how to apply to vote by mail?
Do you know the location of your polling place or drop boxes for vote by mail?

When will you cast your ballot? Date? Time of day?

How will you get to the polls?

List of Public Education Friendly Candidates

Date of Primary Election

Federal Offices on the ballot
House:
Senate

State Offices on the ballot
House
Senate
Governor
Other

Date of General Election

Empower and Advocate
Primary Election: March 19, 2024

Primary Election: March 19, 2024

Voter Registration Deadline in satellite offices: Feb 20, 2024
Grace Period Registration: – Feb 21-March 19

For registration and grace period registration, bring two forms of ID. One must include address.

For more election information, please visit: www.elections.il.gov
www.ieanea.org/legislative

To find your polling place please call or visit your county clerk’s website
Use one of these 3 ways to vote!

**Early voting - in your Election Office:**
Feb. 2, 2024 – March 19, 2024

**Vote by Mail - Submit application beginning**
December 20, 2023
**Ballots mailed to applicants beginning Feb. 8, 2024**
Mail ballot must be **received** in the local election office by March 14

Last day online voter registration: March 3

**Vote on Primary Election Day March 19 –**
March 19, 2024 6:00 AM – 7:00 PM
Vote only at your assigned polling place.
Find the Names and Contact Information of Your Legislators Go to the IEA website/legislative/find my legislators. www.ieavotes.org

Contact your legislators and share this information with friends/family.
Make Some Noise!

Attend Rallies and Marches!
Write postcards, make phone calls!
Advocacy - Stay Informed:
Use the NEA and State Affiliate Websites

- Get connected to the NEA website at http://www.nea.org/ and your state affiliate’s website
- Read NEA Today
- Subscribe online to NEA Votes http://educationvotes.nea.org/
- Find and print out the fact sheets NEA and affiliate https://educationvotes.nea.org/issues-and-actions/
- Find the recommended candidates from your state. The Illinois example is: www.ieavotes.org
- Visit the Strong public Schools website www.strongpublicschools.org
- Engage and mobilize in the fight for racial, social and economic justice in public education. https://neaedjustice.org/
- Become an education advocate.
Keep Informed About Voting Rights

What's Happening in Your State

Learn more about existing voting rights laws and pending legislation across all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Select State  
Get Results

State Voting Rights Tracker
https://tracker.votingrightslab.org/states
Help Elect Public Education- Friendly Candidates to Protect Public Education!

The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education is a federal political action committee (PAC) for NEA members. The fund financially supports pro-public education candidates on the federal and state levels regardless of their political affiliation.

Join the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education

https://www.neafund.org/Donate/#
Your Vote Matters!
It impacts your classroom and your students’ Public Education!

Stay Informed.
Share information with your friends and family.

Visit the websites in this document.

Vote!
Why Should We Care About Voter Suppression?

**Stacey Abrams: Educators’ Call to Action**

“The consequences of silence have not been outweighed by the consequences of action,” Abrams said. “We need every single member of the NEA, every single educator who believes the right to vote should be sacred, to stay on top of this. ...That means calling [legislators] every day, reaching out to our communities...If we do that every day this summer, we will see change and we will see progress.”

From Stacey Abrams’ address to the delegates at the 2021 NEA RA.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

• Mayer, Jane “Inside the Koch-Backed Effort to Block the Largest Election-Reform Bill in Half a Century.” *The New Yorker*. 29 March 2021. Online.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

• The Heritage Foundation: https://www.heritage.org
  https://www.britannica.com/topic/voter-suppression
BIBLIOGRAPHY

• “Natives Face Obstacles to Voting Most Everywhere. Is MN different?” *The Circle: News From A Native American Perspective*. 6 July 2020. Online. TheCircleNews@gmail.com

• Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote. Online. www.apiavote.org


• Parramore, Lynn. “Meet the Economist Behind the One Percent’s Stealth Takeover of America.” History of Economic Thought/Institutions, Policy and Politics. 30 May 2018. 
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Videos:
• Illinois Education Association. IEA RA. 2020. Video. Online
  03 IEA RA – Why does your vote matter on Vimeo
  10 IEA RA – Why does your vote matter on Vimeo
  11 IEA RA – Why does your vote matter on Vimeo
  01 IEA RA – Why is it important to vote for public education on Vimeo
  09 IEA RA – Why is it important to vote for public education on Vimeo

• The Rauch Brothers Animations. “A More Perfect Union.” Story Corps. 30 June 2015. Online
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AA87JWa0bEw

  https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2021/05/heritage-foundation-dark-money-voter-suppression-laws/

SLIDES ON FUNDING SOURCES:
- Donors Trust.org

Two Additional Graphics of Funding Sources:
Want More Information?

Contact us –

Carol Schnaiter: schnaitercarol@gmail.com

Diane Chapman: dianchap@att.net