



Campus Voter Engagement Plan

2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Frostburg State University's 2026–2028 ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan outlines the university's continued commitment to fostering civic learning, democratic engagement, and student voter participation across campus. Developed by Jamie Winters, Associate Director for Student Organizations and Community Engagement, in collaboration with the campus/community stakeholders, the plan provides a strategic framework for increasing nonpartisan voter education, civic dialogue, voter registration, and democratic participation among students at Frostburg State University. The action plan reflects the university's belief that higher education institutions play a vital role in preparing informed, engaged, and socially responsible citizens who actively participate in democracy and community life.

Implemented across Frostburg State University through partnerships with Student Affairs, academic departments, Athletics, Residence Life, student organizations, faculty, staff, local election officials, and community partners, the plan focuses on expanding equitable access to voter information and civic engagement opportunities for all students. The 2026–2028 action plan emphasizes goals related to voter education, ballot access, civic dialogue, leadership development, coalition building, assessment, and long-term sustainability. Through coordinated campus-wide programming, curricular and co-curricular initiatives, peer-to-peer outreach, and strategic partnerships with organizations such as the Allegany County Board of Elections and the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge program, Frostburg State University seeks to strengthen democratic participation and cultivate a campus culture where civic responsibility and voter engagement are embedded into the student experience.

LEADERSHIP

As part of Frostburg State University's ongoing commitment to civic engagement, the university President formally declared their support for voter education and participation by signing the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Presidential Commitment at <https://allinchallenge.org/presidents-commitment/>. By joining this nationwide initiative, Frostburg State University publicly affirms its dedication to fostering a campus culture that values informed voting and active citizenship. This commitment strengthens existing efforts to engage students in the democratic process and demonstrates the importance of sharing their voice by voting. We believe this action enhances visibility for voter engagement programs and inspire broader participation across campus, especially with them being a newly hired university, President.

Coalition:

Broadening the campus coalition for voter engagement at Frostburg State University is essential to enhancing collaboration, expanding our reach, and increasing the overall impact of our efforts. To strengthen this coalition,

we will to continue to include a diverse range of stakeholders such as academic departments, media relations, student organizations, the university library, athletics, the Allegany County Board of Elections, and the newly hired Frostburg City Administrator. By engaging with these key partners, we will continue the already existing coalition entitled Campus Civic and Democratic Engagement Advisory Council, that is composed of representatives from key stakeholders on campus and within the community. This council meets regularly to coordinate initiatives, share resources, and develop a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to promote and sustain voter engagement across the Frostburg community.

LOCAL PARTNERS:

- J. Glenn Beall Institute for Public Affairs – Jacob Shade
- Allegany County Board of Elections
- Allegany College of Maryland
- NAACP – local chapter
- Student Government Association – President or Designee
- Student Athletic Advisory Committee – President
- Fraternity & Sorority Life – VP of Programming
- Community Engagement Staff
- Media Relations Office - ye DeMartino
- Veterans Affairs Office - Dr. Clarissa Lang, Director
- FSU Faculty & Staff
 - Programming Partners: Political Science (Dr. Scott Johnson) and Communications (Dr. Elesha Ruminski)
- Lewis J. Ort Library Staff – Dr. Randall Lowe, Director
- Student Organizations – Black Student Alliance, Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc., College Panhellenic, NCNW, RHA, Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.
- Frostburg City Administrator – Patrick O’Brien

NATIONAL PARTNERS:

[ALL IN-Campus Democracy Challenge](#)

[Ask Every Student](#)

[Transform Mid-Atlantic](#)

[Campus Vote Project](#)

[Students Learn Students Vote Coalition](#)

[TurboVote](#)

COMMITMENT

Frostburg State University has been deeply committed to preparing informed, engaged, and socially responsible citizens who actively contribute to their communities and participate thoughtfully in democratic life since 2018. This is the 5th Voter Action Plan that Frostburg State University has developed and submitted to ALL IN and in 2024 Frostburg State University was recognized as one of the Most Engaged Campuses for College Student Voting.

As one of twelve institutions within the University System of Maryland, Frostburg State University serves a diverse student population in the Appalachian region of Western Maryland, with many students originating from the greater Baltimore/Washington, D.C. area. Located in a region impacted by economic challenges, limited transportation access, and reduced community resources, the university recognizes its responsibility to empower students through civic education, democratic engagement, volunteerism, and public service.

Civic learning and democratic engagement are embedded within the university's mission, institutional values, and student experience. The Division of Student Affairs advances this commitment by providing meaningful opportunities for engagement that enhances personal and professional growth within supportive and inclusive environments. Through the Office of Student Engagement, Frostburg State University strives to develop active citizen leaders who are prepared to address local, national, and global issues through democratic participation, community organizing, service, and inclusive dialogue.

The university's commitment to civic engagement is visible and ongoing through the active support of senior leadership, including the President, Provost, Vice Presidents, and other key administrative leaders. Frostburg State University's President will formally demonstrate this commitment by signing the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge President's Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation. University leadership regularly communicates civic engagement priorities and voter participation initiatives with the campus community through institutional messaging, National Voter Registration Day communications, campus-wide announcements, university websites, and collaborative programming efforts. These commitments are also shared externally with stakeholders including students and families, alumni, local community organizations, the Allegany County Board of Elections, the University System of Maryland, national civic engagement organizations, and community partners.

Frostburg State University views civic learning as an essential and sustainable component of campus culture rather than a standalone initiative. The university's Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement efforts are guided by four interconnected pillars: Democratic Engagement, Volunteerism, Service-Learning, and National Service. These pillars support a campus-wide culture that encourages students to become informed voters, engaged community members, and lifelong participants in democracy. This work is strengthened through partnerships and guidance from organizations including National Campus Compact, NASPA's Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement initiative, the American Democracy Project, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities' Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative.

The university continues to expand civic learning opportunities across both curricular and co-curricular experiences. Democratic education and civic dialogue are incorporated throughout academic programs and campus programs, including coursework and programming connected to political science, history, sociology, social work, psychology, education, organizational leadership, environmental studies, communication, and experiential learning opportunities. Faculty and staff facilitate discussions surrounding current events, elections, public policy, historical analysis, and civic responsibility to strengthen students' critical thinking, communication skills, and understanding of diverse perspectives. Frostburg State University is also exploring opportunities to further integrate civic learning and democratic engagement into an elective course.

Experiential learning remains a foundational component of Frostburg State University's civic engagement strategy. Through volunteerism, service-learning projects, civic dialogue initiatives, simulations, community partnerships, and national service opportunities, students are encouraged to connect classroom learning with real-world social challenges and democratic participation. These experiences help students understand the importance of informed civic action while strengthening their leadership skills and sense of community responsibility.

Frostburg State University demonstrates its commitment to assessment and continuous improvement by utilizing internal Microsoft Forms assessments as program evaluations to measure student engagement outcomes, voter participation efforts, and the effectiveness of civic learning initiatives. Assessment data is used to format future programming, identify areas for growth, and strengthen institutional practices related to civic and democratic engagement.

The university further supports voter engagement through collaborative partnerships with local and state organizations, including the Allegany County Board of Elections. Frostburg State University continues to explore opportunities to establish an on-campus polling location and remains committed to continuing those conversations to increase voting accessibility and safety for both students and the broader community. Additionally, the university actively participates in statewide civic engagement initiatives through the University System of Maryland's Community Engagement and Civic Education (CECE) efforts and continues exploring opportunities connected to the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement.

As the nation approaches the 250th anniversary of American independence, Frostburg State University reaffirms its belief that civic engagement is both a fundamental right and a shared responsibility. Through intentional leadership, inclusive programming, academic integration, community partnerships, and sustained institutional support, Frostburg State University remains committed to strengthening democratic participation and cultivating a campus culture where civic responsibility, voter engagement, and public service are integral to the student experience and institutional identity.

LANDSCAPE

Since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, Frostburg State University has experienced ongoing challenges related to enrollment, student involvement, and rebuilding campus engagement. Like many institutions nationwide, the university has seen shifts in how students participate in campus life, with fewer students engaging in traditional in-person programming and community activities. These changes have required the university to rethink strategies for fostering student connection, involvement, civic learning, and democratic participation.

The university's transition to NCAA Division II athletics has significantly increased the student-athlete population on campus. While this growth has strengthened recruitment and expanded opportunities for student involvement, it has also created new engagement challenges for students balancing athletics, employment, academic responsibilities, and attending extracurricular educational and civic opportunities. Many students now engage more virtually or remain within residence hall communities rather than participating in traditional campus activities.

Despite these challenges, Frostburg State University has seen encouraging progress in rebuilding campus engagement during the most recent academic year. Student participation in programming, leadership opportunities, service initiatives, and civic engagement activities has steadily increased as students reconnect with campus life and as the university expands partnerships with community organizations and campus stakeholders.

Key stakeholders supporting civic learning and democratic engagement efforts include university leadership, faculty, staff, Provost (Dr. Mike Mathias and Dr. Sharman Siebenthal, Student Affairs professionals (Dr. Jeff Graham and Robert Cooper), Residence Life staff, Athletics personnel – Rubin Stevenson, student organizations, Resident Assistants (RAs), the Student Government Association (SGA), faculty teaching civic-focused coursework and including civic participation and democratic conversations as part of their curriculum, local election officials, the Allegany County Board of Elections, and community partners throughout the Western Maryland region. These collaborative partnerships help strengthen voter engagement efforts and connect students with civic participation opportunities both on and off campus.

Throughout these institutional changes, voter engagement has remained a consistent priority for Frostburg State University. The university has adapted its outreach efforts by increasing peer-to-peer engagement, expanding digital communication strategies, and strengthening collaborations with departments and student groups that maintain direct contact with students. Special emphasis has been placed on engaging student-athletes in

programs that incorporate democratic engagement as fun challenges that can be completed with their rigorous practice and game schedules and assist in scheduling volunteerism events which is part of the NCAA requirements.

Frostburg State University continues to promote civic learning and democratic engagement through both curricular and co-curricular experiences. Civic and democratic engagement learning outcomes are assessed through internal Microsoft Forms assessments as program evaluations to measure student participation, engagement, and educational impact.

Academic areas that frequently incorporate civic learning and democratic engagement include Political Science, History, Sociology, Social Work, Psychology, Education, Leadership Studies, Environmental Studies, Communication, and other courses emphasizing public policy, social issues, civic responsibility, community engagement, and experiential learning. Faculty in many of these disciplines facilitate discussions, add extra-curricular programs for extra credit, and include reflection activities on how these topics mesh with the curriculum they are learning. Such topics are: current events, elections, public policy, civic responsibility, and civil discourse to strengthen students' critical thinking and communication skills.

The area of Student and Community Engagement also hosts a variety of programs and initiatives focused on democratic engagement and civic learning, including voter registration drives, National Voter Registration Day events, Constitution Day programming, civic dialogue discussions (Times Talks), leadership development programs, service-learning opportunities, volunteer initiatives, and educational events connected to local, state, and national elections. Student organizations including the Student Government Association (SGA), Black Student Alliance, W.O.M.E.N, and Fraternities and Sororities have participated in or hosted programs centered on voter education, civic responsibility, advocacy, and community engagement.

Several barriers continue to impact student voter participation and civic engagement efforts both locally and nationally. These barriers include limited student understanding of voter registration processes, confusion regarding absentee voting procedures and residency requirements, limitations during the general election with the University System of Maryland not proving election day off as a day to participate in their civic duty to vote, and reduced student participation in traditional campus programming following the pandemic. While Maryland's voter identification laws are generally less restrictive than some states, students may still face confusion surrounding acceptable forms of identification and registration requirements, particularly first-time voters and out-of-state students and be anxious about the ICE program and not feeling safe to vote due to possible harassment.

National research also continues to show that some college students feel disconnected from the political process, question whether voting creates meaningful change or lack confidence in understanding political systems and election information. Generational trends increased digital engagement, misinformation, and declining trust in institutions have also contributed to lower civic participation among some student populations nationwide. Frostburg State University recognizes these challenges and remains committed to addressing participation gaps through nonpartisan voter education, civic dialogue opportunities, peer-to-peer engagement strategies, and accessible voter outreach initiatives.

Despite institutional and societal challenges, Frostburg State University remains committed to creating equitable access to voter education and democratic engagement opportunities for all students, regardless of background, academic discipline, residential status, or level of campus involvement.

Due to new federal regulations and guidance from university counsel, demographic and voter participation data from NSLVE reports will not be publicly included within this report.

Voter Registration and Turnout Rates:

- **Registration Rate:** This will be kept at registration tables solely as a number tally at tabling for actual registered voters by the Allegany County Board of Elections.
- **Voting Rate:** The voting rate will be kept by the number of students who use the van shuttle service to vote locally as a registered or absentee ballot voter.

Demographic Breakdown:

- Will not be able to be collected.

SHORT TERM GOALS

Goal 1: Promote Informed and Inclusive Voter Participation

Increase equitable access to nonpartisan voter information by ensuring that 100% of incoming students receive voter registration and election resources during orientation, residence hall programming, or first-year seminars. All incoming first-year students will receive a brochure about voting practices, links to voter information, and how to register for primary states for our students (PA, VA, and DC). Host at least four campus-wide voter education initiatives each semester focused on voter registration, absentee voting, and civic responsibility. Expand outreach to commuter, graduate, and underrepresented student populations through targeted tabling, digital campaigns, and partnerships with student organizations. Assist with hosting virtual events with the Hagerstown campus that is affiliated with Frostburg State University but cannot participate in many events.

Goal 2: Candidate and Issue Awareness Through Programming

Host a minimum of six nonpartisan educational programs during the election cycle, including Common Grounds discussions, Times Talks, debate watch events, and issue-focused panels. Collaborate with the Allegany County Board of Elections and organizations to provide accurate information about candidates, ballot initiatives, and election processes. Increase student participation in civic dialogue programming by 15% compared to the previous election cycle. Civic engagement is a core strategic priority and institutional goal at Frostburg State University. The university promotes civic responsibility through a dedicated position of civic engagement and service-learning initiatives, preparing students for active citizenship in local and global communities (university webpage).

Goal 3: Voter Education and Outreach

Develop and distribute comprehensive voter education materials in both digital and print formats by the start of each semester. Create a series of short educational videos covering voter registration, voting methods, election deadlines, and student voting rights, with the goal of reaching at least 2,000 student views collectively. Encourage faculty and staff to incorporate civic engagement discussions or voter education resources into at least 10 academic courses or campus programs annually.

Goal 4: Media Relations and Communications

Implement a coordinated nonpartisan communication campaign utilizing university social media, campus news outlets, email newsletters, digital signage, and the Bobcats Vote webpage. Publish or share voter education content at least twice weekly during peak election periods and increase engagement with voter information posts by 20% over the previous cycle. Ensure all election-related communications include key deadlines, voting resources, and links to verified election information.

Goal 5: Partnerships and Collaboration

Strengthen and expand the university's voter engagement coalition by maintaining active partnerships with the Allegany County Board of Elections, Student Government Association, residence life, academic departments, and community organizations. Recruit at least three new campus or community partners into the coalition by Fall 2026. Provide annual training opportunities for student leaders and volunteers focused on nonpartisan voter engagement practices, election information, and civic leadership development. We are also in contact with Coca Cola due to their current branding for the 250th and attempting to form a partnership for merchandise with red, white, and blue branding for our opening drone event.

Goal 6: Assessment and Sustainability

Measure program effectiveness through event attendance, voter registration participation, digital engagement analytics, and post-event surveys assessing civic knowledge and confidence. Increase Frostburg State University's student voting rate by at least 5% in the 2026 election cycle and improve voter registration rates among first-year students through newly developed educational platforms and outreach initiatives. Develop an annual assessment report summarizing outcomes, identifying areas for improvement, and outlining recommendations for sustaining long-term civic engagement efforts.

Goal 7: Achieve ALL IN-Democracy Challenge Recognition

Meet or exceed the criteria necessary to earn the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Gold Seal designation by demonstrating strong student voter registration, engagement, and participation efforts during the 2026 election cycle. Submit all required action plans, NSLVE reports, and institutional participation data by established deadlines while increasing campus participation in ALL IN-Democracy Challenge programs and initiatives.

LONG TERM GOALS:

Long-Term Goal 1: Establish Frostburg State University as a Regional Hub for Civic and Election Engagement

Over the next 5–10 years, Frostburg State University will continue to work to become a recognized hub for civic engagement and democratic participation within Western Maryland by expanding partnerships with local election officials, community organizations, and state agencies. A primary objective will be securing and maintaining an official polling location on campus that is accessible to both students and community members. To support this effort, university representatives and coalition members will continue attending monthly Allegany County Board of Elections meetings to advocate for a campus-based polling site that better serves the accessibility and transportation needs of students and the broader Frostburg community.

Frostburg State University also aims to expand campus-hosted voter engagement initiatives, candidate education forums, and election-related programming that connects students directly with the democratic process in meaningful and experiential ways. By establishing a visible and accessible civic engagement presence on campus, the university seeks to position itself as a trusted community partner for nonpartisan voter education and election participation efforts throughout the region.

Long-Term Goal 2: Integrate Civic and Voter Engagement Across Academic Curriculum and Experiential Learning

Over the next decade, Frostburg State University will work collaboratively with faculty and academic departments to integrate civic learning, voter education, and democratic engagement opportunities into coursework across all majors and disciplines. The university's long-term vision is to create a campus culture where civic responsibility and democratic participation are seamlessly woven into the student learning experience, regardless of academic

program. Particular course curriculums that could be reviewed are Communication, English, Psychology, Sociology, Government, and possibly developing a 2-credit class created specifically to cover such topic areas.

Faculty and staff will be encouraged to incorporate voter education discussions, historical election simulations, civic reflection activities, and immersive experiential learning opportunities into classroom curriculum and co-curricular programming. Frostburg State University recognizes that experiential learning is one of the most impactful methods of student engagement and reflection, helping students better understand the importance of voting, public service, and community involvement.

The university plan will be to expand interdisciplinary partnerships that connect civic engagement initiatives with leadership development, communication studies, history, political science, social sciences, and community-based learning programs. These efforts will help students develop lifelong habits of informed civic participation while strengthening the university's mission of preparing engaged and active citizens.

Long-Term Goal 3: Create a Sustainable Campus Culture of Annual Voter Engagement and Participation

Within the next 5–10 years, Frostburg State University aims to establish a campus-wide culture in which every student is consistently encouraged and supported in participating in the democratic process. The university's vision is for every eligible student to be asked to register to vote at least once each academic year through coordinated outreach efforts embedded into campus life, including orientation programs, residence life initiatives, student organization activities, advising, and classroom engagement.

The university will continue developing comprehensive and accessible voter education resources, so students feel confident navigating voter registration, mail-in voting, absentee voting, polling locations, and election deadlines. Special emphasis will be placed on ensuring students understand how to vote both on campus and within their home communities.

To sustain this culture long-term, Frostburg State University will maintain ongoing voter engagement campaigns, student leadership development opportunities, coalition partnerships, and annual assessment practices that reinforce democratic participation as a core component of the student experience. Through these continued efforts, the university seeks to normalize civic engagement as an expectation and shared responsibility across the entire campus community.

STRATEGY

Pluralism and Free Speech

Creating events that promote pluralism and free speech on campus is essential to fostering a respectful, inclusive environment where diverse perspectives can be expressed and heard. Our campus has had a long-standing series that allows our students, faculty, and staff to speak openly and freely about various topics impacting our society. Times Talk has become a staple to our campus community and has varying topics and attendance. A new program that we would like to add is called Common Ground. The concept is to create a relaxed, respectful space where students and community members can discuss political candidates, share diverse perspectives, and learn more about the electoral process, and the elected or future candidates while enjoying coffee and refreshments. Our goal is to host this program twice a academic term, and work with the J. Glenn Beall Institute for Public Affairs to enlist candidates to visit campus and have these open-dialog presentations.

CELEBRATION OF THE 250TH SIGNING OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

As part of the 250th Declaration of Independence celebration, our voter engagement and participation initiative combines education with immersive, interactive experiences designed to inspire civic pride and historical awareness. We live in a rich historical area where many battles were fought. Adding an element of cultural immersion will hopefully aid in the expansion of our history but also enticing excitement for the topic. The kick-off event will be a drone show in our football stadium on the night before classes. The first 800 attendees will receive a Frostburg State University specially designed 250th celebration shirt, patriotic glow stick, and commemorative pin. The drone show will have a patriotic and university theme.

To win a Declaration of Independence comparative coin, students will enter a 4-player team to participate in a team activity where they answer Jeopardy-style quiz questions focused on U.S. history, voting rights, and key constitutional facts, encouraging participants to test their knowledge in a fun, competitive setting.

Later in the semester, around October, a custom-designed escape room has been developed to challenge teams to solve puzzles based on the evolution of American democracy, reinforcing the importance of civic participation. We will offer off-site excursions, one to Gettysburg and the other to Fort Necessity, and possibly a third to Ohiopyle. These excursions will provide powerful, real-world context—Gettysburg offering a reflective exploration of the Civil War's impact on democratic ideals, Fort Necessity highlighting the early roots of American conflict and governance and Ohiopyle where key routes into American exploration meet. These activities not only deepen the rich historical context in our area, but the understanding of this history may help motivate participants to see the struggles our forefathers experienced and why voting is a vital, living part of the American story.

Voter Registration

Mascot Utilization

New this year, the Department of Student Engagement has secured an opportunity to work with media relations to create a series of videos starring Bobbi Cat (the university mascot) registering to vote, how to find the process for each state's early voting and absentee ballot process online, and reviewing the importance of voting in a local election. For the election night party, we will have a picture of Bobbi Cat dressed in an Uncle Sam costume for a photo shoot opportunity

Turbovote

FSU partners with [TurboVote](#) to offer students an online platform for all their voting needs, no matter where they are registered to vote. TurboVote helps students register to vote, obtain absentee ballots, and offers email and text message reminders about upcoming elections, polling locations, and other important voter information.

Voter Information Tables

Each semester, at least one voter registration drive will occur on campus. During the 2026 Fall Semester, the Community Engagement Democratic Liaison will hosts weekly voter information tables in the Student Union, the Lane University Center. At these tables, students can learn more about the voting process, register to vote, obtain absentee ballots, find polling locations, and information about early voting and election day activities.

Athletic Team Challenge

Student-athlete and Civic Engagement efforts will also be expanded through participation in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge athletic voter registration program. We are asking the coaches to sign [the coaches pledge](#) as a commitment to a university-wide competition that will occur among athletic teams to encourage voter registration and civic participation. Teams will compete to register the highest percentage of eligible student-athletes prior to election day.

To further incentivize participation, the winning team will receive a “Civic Engagement Champion” cup award along with a team-based prize such as a catered team dinner (up to \$1000) or exclusive team apparel featuring Bobbi Cat in his democratic engagement regalia. The initiative is designed to promote friendly competition while strengthening voter awareness and participation among student-athletes during the 2026 Maryland general election year.

FIRST-YEAR STUDENT INITIATIVE

To enhance student understanding of the importance of voting and the democratic process, a comprehensive voter engagement initiative will be implemented during the summer and the fall 2026 semester. A voter engagement table will be featured at the Organization Meet and Greet event in Aug 2026, providing information and registration resources. Additionally, in collaboration with the Allegany County Board of Elections, voter outreach will be incorporated into the annual Block Party program in September 2026, supported by an on-site elections staff member. New this year, voter education materials developed by the Allegany County Board of Elections will be distributed inclusively within first-year student materials to ensure broad access to reliable information for sessions during the summer of fall 2026. Furthermore, the Community Engagement Democratic Liaison will be available to deliver presentations in *Introduction to Higher Education* courses, a required class for all first-year students, to promote civic awareness and encourage lifelong participation in the democratic process.

CIVIC HOLIDAYS

National Voter Registration Day

For September the university will host National Voter Registration Day on campus. Activities for the day include a social marketing campaign with a newly designed photo backdrop, a table with educational activities, voter registration and absentee ballot education and support in the Lane University Center. Partners for this event include the Allegany County Board of Elections, the Student Government Association, student organizations, media relations, and the university library. We will share the [ALL IN to Vote](#) on social media and in emails sent to students so they can look up election information like deadlines, voter ID, and take actions like registering to vote and requesting mail-in-ballots

Voter Education Week

In October, the Voter Education Week timeframe allows the student staff and organizations to promote the importance of students voting. Activities such as registering to vote, requesting a mail-in ballot, planning to vote, learning what's on the ballot, and getting more involved in the voting process. A board is set up to allow students

to write what they vote for on one day and on another day, they can write what actions or causes they would like to see discussed by candidates. The department will work with the women's Field Hockey Team and voter engagement; this is part of an athletic initiative with support and our area.

Vote Early Day

In October, Vote Early Day is established to educate students about the early voting process, where they can vote early, when early voting is available, and resources about their ballot. This effort is put out via social media as well as in the student union at one of our many voting tables throughout the semester.

Election Hero Day

In November, for Election Hero Day, Student Engagement will be recognizing students, faculty, and staff who take the time to act as poll workers and will be working to put together interviews to be shared on the Bobcats Vote page and social media of poll workers discussing their experience, and why they choose to volunteer. Student Engagement will be creating thank you cards for these workers and our Student Government Association members to thank them for their time in democratic engagement.

Constitution Day

In partnership with the Ort Library, and the J. Glenn Beall Institute for Public Affairs, this event is hosted. A copy of the Constitution is printed out, with a QR Code leading to a survey and question to answer on a student's favorite part of the constitution and what it means to them. Since the Constitution was signed, pens are distributed as part of the promotional materials as well as pocket constitutions. A raffle will also be included where a bound copy of the three great documents of the United States, an American flag, and gift card as part of a social media promotion to take a selfie with the Constitution and post on the university social media platform. There is also an interactive activity of constitution trivia available for students. To incorporate the Declaration and Constitution events, Student Engagement are purchasing/borrowing historical costumes of Ben Franklin, George Washington, and a colonial community member for a fun interactive activity.

VOTER EDUCATION

A new program that Student Engagement would like to implement with the collaboration of some of our Campus Civic Engagement stakeholders, is to develop a video series on voter education and the importance of voting. This voter education program will engage students in creating short, informative videos covering essential topics related to voting, such as voter registration, understanding ballots, election timelines, and the rights and responsibilities of voters, and have that peer-to-peer connection level of education. Through this creative initiative, students can build a partnership with the Allegany County Board of Elections to choose correct terminology and language, and resources to embed in the video series. This allows nonpartisan information in accessible formats designed to inform and empower their peers. The project will emphasize the importance of civic participation and help students recognize how voting serves as a vital mechanism for expressing community voices and shaping public policy. By combining media production with civic learning, the program can foster a deeper understanding of democratic engagement.

Times Talk and the New York Times Subscription Program

As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance student awareness of current events and promote informed civic engagement, Frostburg State University has continued its campus-wide subscription to *The New York Times*. This initiative has enabled the Office of Student Engagement to collaborate with the J. Glenn Beall Institute for Public Affairs in hosting bi-weekly “Times Talk” events, where students, faculty, and staff gather to discuss current political topics featured in the *New York Times*.

Beginning in 2026, the program will include more faculty and staff partnerships, allowing academic departments to collaborate with the Community Engagement Democratic Liaison in selecting discussion topics and preparing materials. This collaborative approach introduces diverse perspectives, fosters interdisciplinary connections, and encourages greater student participation.

To further strengthen the program’s educational value, a new civil discourse component has been incorporated to teach students effective communication and respectful dialogue. Informational pamphlets, developed with academic input, will be distributed at each session to provide a brief overview of civil discourse principles and best practices. Through these discussions, students are encouraged to express their viewpoints, consider alternative perspectives, and engage in thoughtful, rigorous dialogue on complex political and social issues.

BALLOTT ACCESS

To ensure students are confident when they vote, a special information table during the two weeks leading up to the election will happen. At this table, students can obtain sample ballots from every county in MD, along with some adjacent counties in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. There will also be information on how to find details on candidates’ platforms for multiple issues, including resources like Ballotpedia and Vote411.

Student Engagement will again work with the county to ensure that more provisional ballots are available at the closest polling station to the university, which also assists community members as well. During election day, Student Engagement will reach out to the Advisory Group members to assist with the polling location troubleshooting if any issues should arise.

Although 2026 is a Maryland state primary election year, the University System of Maryland has elected not to close campuses for students and staff on Election Day. As a result, there will be an increased emphasis on educating the campus community about early voting and absentee voting options. Planned initiatives will include expanded voter education programming, informational tabling events, and distribution of educational pamphlets detailing the steps required to successfully complete and submit early voting and absentee ballots. These efforts are intended to increase voter accessibility and participation during a significant state election cycle

Turbovote Reminders

Students can sign up with [TurboVote](#) to receive reminders and information on polling locations, registration and absentee ballot deadlines, and election day information.

Mail-In Ballots

With many students registered at their permanent address in other counties in MD or other states, Frostburg State University focuses on educating students on the mail-in ballot process and assisting students in obtaining

and turning in their mail-in ballots. Frostburg State will continue to host the Board of Elections staff on campus once a week for four weeks leading up to the elections to collect Mail-In ballots on campus as well as answer questions and help students register and obtain Mail-In ballots.

Election Judge Recruitment

With student voter participation serving as a key component of democratic engagement, Frostburg State University is committed to strengthening and expanding its partnership with the Allegany County Board of Elections. Building upon existing collaborative efforts, the university will continue to work closely with local election officials to support civic learning opportunities, voter education initiatives, and election administration efforts throughout the 2026 election cycle and beyond.

Through regular attendance and participation in the Allegany County Board of Elections monthly meetings, Frostburg State University has established an ongoing platform for communication, collaboration, and strategic planning related to student civic engagement. These meetings provide opportunities to share ideas, identify community needs, and develop new initiatives that support both student learning and the county's election operations.

In 2026, Student Engagement will reintroduce the Poll Worker Education Seminar in partnership with the Allegany County Board of Elections. This initiative is designed to educate students about the responsibilities and importance of serving as Election Judges and Poll Workers while addressing a critical local community need. At present, the county is experiencing a significant shortage of election workers, with nearly 100 additional poll workers needed for the upcoming election cycle. By recruiting and training college students to serve in these roles, the university aims to assist the county in maintaining safe, efficient, and accessible elections, but allowing students to work the early voting polls in June 2026 at their local community. This helps maintain their engagement with the election process and create meaningful opportunities for them to engage directly with democratic institutions, and election officials.

This continued partnership reinforces Frostburg State University's commitment to nonpartisan civic engagement and experiential learning by connecting students with opportunities to actively participate in and support the democratic process at the local level.

Voter Shuttles

On election day, Student Engagement, in partnership with SGA's SafeRide program, hosts a voter shuttle from a centralized location on campus to the local polling location starting at 8:00 am and running every 15 minutes. Staff stay in communication with the shuttle driver and the local polling location and work to divert drop-offs to secondary locations if long lines begin to form, or if issues arise, such as voting machines going down, or if provisional ballots run low, to ensure students have the best voting experience possible.

ELECTION DAY

Debate Watch Parties

Student Engagement will partner with watch parties in the student lounge of the Lane University Center. Student organizations are encouraged to co-sponsor the event and take part in leading discussions at the event. The newly purchased photo backdrop will be featured at the event so proud Bobcats can post their involvement in the event and the democratic process.

As part of our Election Day celebration, Student Engagement will host a table including a democracy wall where students can write statements about why they voted, and what issues are important to them. The table also includes patriotic themes food items, decorations, stickers, and much more. Student Engagement will work with media relations on campus to post photos and excerpts about why students voted and have them use the hashtag #BobcatsVote as part of the promotion for the event and their involvement in the democratic process.

And the celebration will continue with a viewing party in the lounge where students can watch the election results live. The event includes lounge-style seating, food, photo booth, and the continuation of the democracy wall.

REPORTING

Frostburg State University will intentionally share its ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge Action Plan both internally and externally to ensure transparency, collaboration, and active implementation across campus and within the community. Action Plans are included on the university webpage and are visible to all who visit the page. <https://www.frostburg.edu/student-engagement/civic-engagement/voting-information/bobcats-vote/voter-engagement-plan-data.php>

Internal Sharing

The action plan will be shared with key campus stakeholders including the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Government Association (SGA), Executive Cabinet, Student Affairs staff, academic departments, and student organization leaders. The plan will also be distributed during departmental meetings, leadership trainings, student organization workshops, and campus coalition meetings to ensure broad awareness and engagement.

The university's voter engagement coalition, including faculty, staff, students, community partners, and local election officials, will review the action plan regularly throughout the academic year. Coalition meetings will focus on implementation strategies, event planning, voter education initiatives, assessment efforts, and identifying opportunities for collaboration across campus departments and organizations.

To support execution of the plan, coalition members will utilize the action plan as a working document to coordinate programming efforts such as voter registration drives, candidate and issue education events, civic dialogue programs, Constitution Day activities, debate watch events, National Voter Registration Day initiatives, and election-day engagement efforts. The coalition will also use assessment data and participation feedback to evaluate program effectiveness and make adjustments as needed.

External Sharing

The university's action plan will be publicly available on the Frostburg State University Bobcats Vote webpage and shared through university communication platforms and social media channels. The Bobcats Vote webpage is a centralized location for student voter information. This page includes upcoming deadlines, links to voter registration, including TurboVote, our voter engagement plan, NSLVE data, and information on polling locations, mail-in voting, early voting, and election day shuttles. The website also contains information about how to be more engaged in the voting process, including how to become a poll worker for upcoming elections.

FSU will also share updates about civic engagement initiatives through campus newsletters, university announcements, digital signage, and social media platforms. Social media content may include:

- Voter registration deadlines and reminders
- Nonpartisan election information

- Civic engagement event promotions
- Student voter participation initiatives
- National Voter Registration Day programming
- Constitution Day activities
- Early voting and election day reminders
- Highlights from campus civic engagement events
- Student leadership and volunteer spotlights
- Information about how students can participate in democratic engagement efforts

Community partners, including local election officials, nonprofit organizations, and civic engagement partners, will receive copies of the plan electronically and be invited to collaborate on programming and outreach efforts.

NSLVE Data Sharing

Historically, Frostburg State University has shared National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) reports internally in conjunction with its democratic engagement planning efforts. Due to federal privacy regulations, including FERPA considerations, individual-level student voting data will not be publicly disclosed.

Continuous Improvement

The university will use available NSLVE trainings and recommendations, campus assessments, participation data, and stakeholder feedback to inform programming decisions, identify areas for growth, and strengthen civic learning and democratic engagement initiatives across campus.

The evaluation results will be used to make data-driven adjustments to our programs. This process will help ensure that Student Engagement is continuously improving how our department supports students to engage as active citizens.

EVALUATION

A successful year for Frostburg State University's democratic engagement efforts would mean that students are informed, empowered, and actively participating in the democratic process. Success would include increased student voter registration efforts, higher participation in voter education programming, strong collaboration between campus and community partners, and meaningful student engagement in civic learning opportunities throughout the academic year. A successful plan would also result in sustained partnerships, increased awareness of election processes and civic responsibility, and the continued integration of civic engagement into the student experience.

The university's coalition seeks to create a campus culture where democratic engagement is visible, accessible, and supported across academic and co-curricular experiences. This success can be reflected through increased participation in voter engagement events, utilization of voter resources and services, faculty and student organization involvement, and continued institutional commitment to nonpartisan civic engagement initiatives.

To track progress toward these goals, Frostburg State University will collect and review data throughout the year and after each election cycle through Microsoft forms, attendance, students using the van shuttle on election day, utilizing registration and mail-in ballot request data from Turbovote, and by tallying questions asked at various tabling initiatives throughout the year. The coalition will analyze the information gathered to determine the effectiveness of programs and outreach strategies, identify areas for improvement, and guide future voter

engagement efforts. Evaluation findings will support institutional planning, reporting requirements, and long-term civic engagement initiatives.

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation process is to help the institution understand:

- Which voter engagement programs and strategies are most effective for students.
- Where gaps in outreach or participation may exist.
- How students are engaging with voter education and democratic participation opportunities.
- How civic engagement efforts support broader institutional goals related to student success, leadership development, and community engagement.
- What adjustments or additional resources, or finances may be needed for future election cycles.

The institution also seeks to use evaluation data to strengthen future programming, improve communication strategies, support grant and designation applications, and demonstrate institutional commitment to civic learning and democratic engagement.

Intended Audience for Evaluation

Evaluation results will be shared with and may be utilized by:

- University leadership and executive administration.
- Faculty and Staff Senates.
- Student Government Association (SGA).
- Student Affairs and Student Engagement staff.
- Academic departments and participating faculty.
- Student organizations and coalition members.
- Community partners and local election officials.
- National and state partners supporting democratic engagement initiatives.

Evaluation findings may also contribute to institutional reporting and applications related to:

- The Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification.
- Voter Friendly Campus Designation.
- All In Action Plan
- Additional civic engagement recognition, assessment initiatives, Foundation grant funding.

Evaluation Timeline

Evaluation efforts will occur on an ongoing basis throughout the academic year and election cycle. Data collection and assessment will occur:

- Before major elections to establish outreach goals and preparedness.
- During voter engagement initiatives and programming.
- Immediately following major events and educational programs.
- After election registration days and other civic holidays to evaluate overall participation and program effectiveness.
- During annual planning discussions to determine future priorities and improvements.

The coalition will review findings regularly throughout the year and conduct a comprehensive post-election assessment following federal and local election cycles.

Information and Data Collected

Frostburg State University will collect data that is accessible, measurable, and appropriate for institutional assessment purposes. Since individual NSLVE student voting data is protected under FERPA regulations and will not be publicly shared, the university will focus on collecting institutionally generated and programmatic data that supports continuous improvement efforts.

Data collected may include:

- Attendance counts at voter engagement and civic education events.
- Post-event surveys measure student learning, voter confidence, program effectiveness, and connection to campus.
- TurboVote utilization metrics, including voter registrations, election reminders, and mail-in ballot requests.
- Student interactions during National Voter Registration Day activities and campus tabling efforts.
- Participation in voter engagement presentations within Introduction to Higher Education courses and other academic classes.
- Student organizations participation in civic engagement programming and training.
- Student participation during Bobcat Bound Days (First-Year Student Meeting) and Student Organization Meet and Greet, and the community Block Party.
- Election Day Shuttle usage data.
- Collaboration data with events with community and university partners and local election officials.
- Student usage of local polling locations and local trends in partnership with the Allegany County Board of Elections.
- Social media engagement (likes or conversations) and webpage analytics related to Bobcats Vote resources.
- Volunteer participation and civic engagement service hours connected to democratic engagement initiatives.
- Watch party attendance and number of student organizations collaborating with the event.

Additional assessment methods may include:

- Focus groups or reflection activities with students.
- Faculty and staff feedback regarding classroom engagement initiatives.
- Campus climate feedback related to civic dialogue and democratic participation.
- Comparative participation trends between election cycles for General and Presidential election events.

Use of Data and Assessment Findings

The coalition will analyze collected information to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth. Data will be used to:

- Improve future voter engagement programming.
- Expand outreach to underrepresented or less engaged student populations.
- Adjust communication and marketing strategies.
- Strengthen partnerships with faculty, student organizations, and community stakeholders.
- Demonstrate institutional impact and accountability.

- Support long-term strategic planning related to civic learning and democratic engagement.

Evaluation findings will also help measure the broader impact of democratic engagement efforts on institutional priorities connected to student leadership, civic responsibility, community engagement, and belonging.

Sharing Results

Evaluation results and assessment findings will be shared internally and externally through:

- Coalition and Student Engagement meeting(s).
- Reports to university leadership and governance groups.
- Presentations to Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and SGA.
- Community partner meetings.
- Annual reports and strategic planning discussions.
- The Bobcats Vote webpage and university communication channels.
- Fraternity and Sorority Life Council meeting – as a main partner with many events.
- Community Engagement Staff.

While individual student voting data will remain protected, combined program information, participation numbers, event outcomes, and institutional engagement efforts may be publicly shared in annual reports to demonstrate Frostburg State University's continued commitment to civic engagement and democratic participation.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

2026

January	29	Times Talk Discussion
February	12	Times Talk Discussion
	26	Times Talk Discussion
March	12	Times Talk Discussion
	26	Times Talk Discussion
	27	Civic Engagement Table for Open House
April	11	Civic Engagement Table for open house
	9	Times Talk Discussion
	23	Times Talk Discussion
May	7	Times Talk Discussions
June		Bobcat Bound Day Sessions TBA and Bobbi Cat Voting Session Launch
August	23	250 th Celebration and Drone show collab with Allegany College
August	26	Civic Engagement Table at Student Meet and Greet
August	28	Times Talk Discussion
September	10	Trip to Fort Necessity

	15	Athletic Teams Challenge
	15	Board of Education Table for Voter Registration
	17	Constitution Day (Celebrated on Campus)
	24	Times Talk Discussion
	26	Trip to Ohiopyle
October	5-10	National Voter Education Week
	8	Times Talk Discussion
	22	Times Talk Discussion
	24	Trip to Gettysburg
	26	Vote Early Day
	31	Voter Engagement Committee Meeting
November	2	Election Hero Day
	3	General Election Day
	4	Times Talk Discussion Special Edition After the Election
	11	Times Talk Discussion
	TBD	Voter Engagement Committee Meeting – Review and Wrap-Up
December	3	Times Talk Discussion

