

## Limited English Proficiency Outreach Report

This is the second of four semiannual reports describing King County Elections' outreach efforts to voters with limited English proficiency as required by Ordinance 17941, Section 34, Proviso 2. Languages referenced include the King County identified Tier 1 language Spanish; and the Tier 2 languages Vietnamese, Russian, Somali, Chinese, Korean, Ukrainian, Amharic, and Punjabi.

### Election Ambassador Program

*Summary:* Create a King County Elections Ambassador Program by recruiting and training individuals fluent in English and in one of the identified languages to serve as community advocates. Ambassadors would assist Elections with interpretation and facilitation services and would create direct connections with communities to register citizens to vote and provide information on the voting process.

*King County Elections Strategic Plan Goal:* Broaden access and opportunities to vote for all eligible citizens.

*King County Elections Strategic Plan Strategy:* Conduct a full assessment of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) community's barriers to voting and related solutions/opportunities for minimizing them.

*Achievement:* Upon completion of over 10 interviews with local, regional, and out of state agencies to gather information about an ambassador program, key findings were presented to leadership and follow-up on a recommendation has begun.

### Key findings

1. Programs take time to establish - Running an ambassador program requires a considerable commitment of both time and effort. Many of the programs reviewed took between five and eight years to become fully established.
2. Translation is not enough – A successful ambassador program is mobile, located in the community, and interacts person to person to establish and maintain meaningful relationships.
3. Each community will have unique needs – Outreach to LEP communities is not a single approach. Trusted voices in the community may vary from group to group and some language groups may need two or more ambassadors. Only by working in the communities will we find out what strategy works best for each LEP group.
4. Be consistent – Program and staff messaging should be consistent to ensure continued trust with each community.
5. Compensate ambassadors for their time – Compensation shows that their time is valued and we are more likely to recruit and retain ambassadors if we compensate them fairly for their time.

6. Use local, available resources – Do not re-invent the wheel. Partner with established organizations and align with existing programs.

### Responding to recommendations

A consultant has been hired who has successfully completed a similar program with the City of Seattle and has also worked with known organizations such as WinWin and ACRS.

This project will provide a plan to implement a program to increase the use of non-English election materials by improving awareness of, and access to, election materials in Tier 1 and Tier 2 identified languages.

Anticipated project timeline:

- December 31, 2015. Draft plan completed.
- January through February 2016. Conduct feasibility analysis with stakeholders, community partners, and staff.
- February 29, 2016. Final plan published to include timeline/milestones, program structure and staffing recommendations, budget, community outreach, and messaging.
- March 2016. Plan implementation.

Anticipated plan objectives include the following:

- Identify and translate voting materials in identified languages.
- Ensure access to registration and materials.
- Provide a process by which the Director will determine if additional languages are required.
- Targeted outreach plan for all identified language communities.
- Provide anticipated budget for implementation and program maintenance.
- Research options and coordinate outreach and registration activities across King County agencies.

### New signs in five languages

During the November 2015 General Election, signs displaying all 5 languages were used at several drop box locations throughout the county and will be used at all locations in 2016.



### Voter Outreach for New American Citizens

King County Elections offers voter education and outreach to new American citizens through a partnership with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Seattle Field Office. The partnership was established to provide voter registration services at naturalization ceremonies and to provide registration forms in alternative languages.



In 2015, King County Elections participated in 27 Naturalization Ceremonies and registered 937 new citizens.

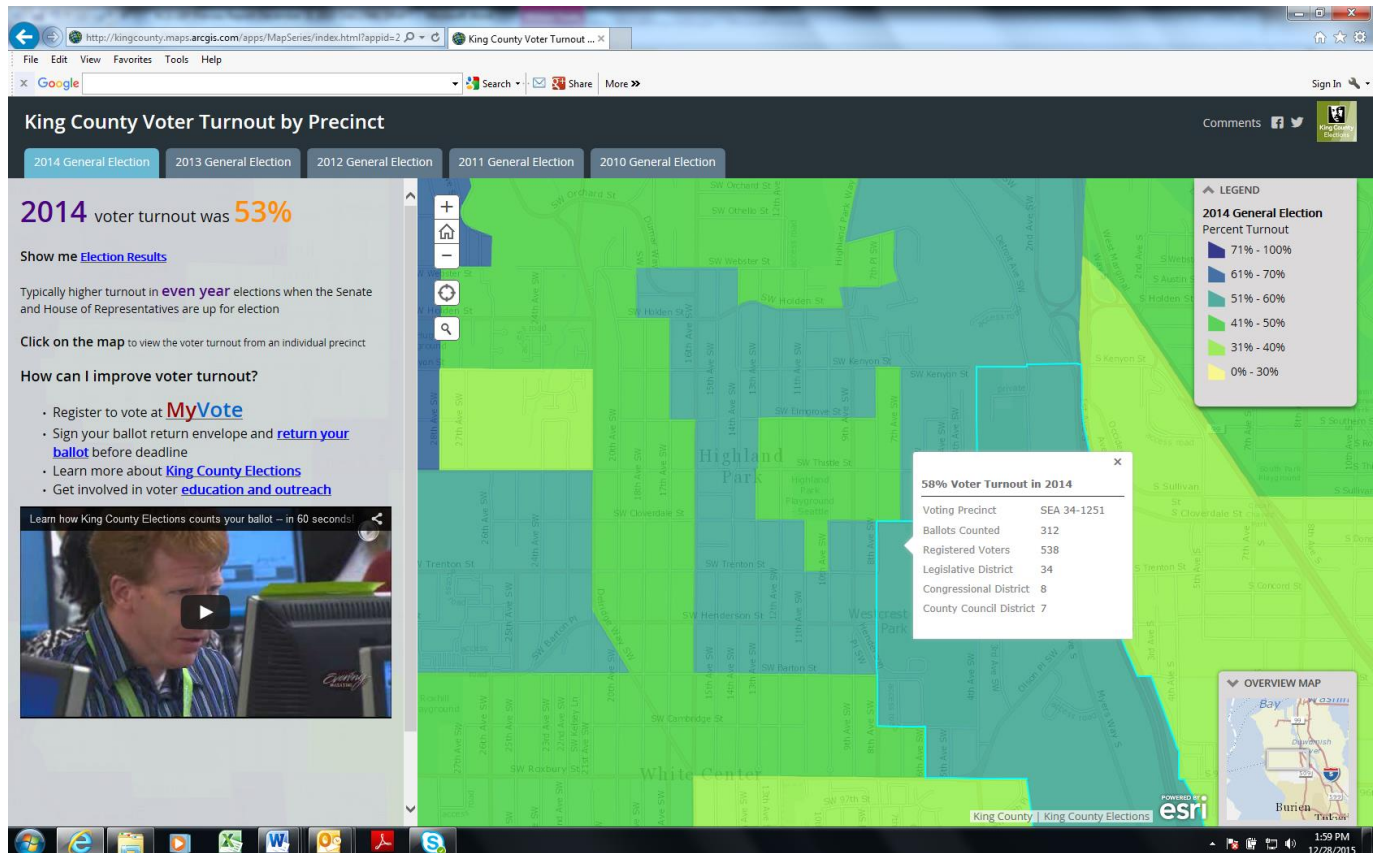
### Online Toolkit

*Summary:* Produce an online toolkit for those conducting voter education and outreach containing materials and links to information for citizens to access and use for community engagement.

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/elections/education-and-outreach.aspx>

*Achievement:* Translated instructional brochures describing who can vote, how to register to vote, and how voting works are available online and paper brochures have been made available to advocacy groups as well as distributed at all outreach events and naturalization ceremonies.

*Achievement:* Interactive voter turnout and registration maps are now available.



These tools were created to provide insight as to where to concentrate outreach to help underserved communities participate in the civic process. The interactive voter turnout maps show the percentage of voter turnout by area or precinct for the 2010-2014 general elections. The voter registration maps for 2013 and 2014 show the percentage of eligible voting age registered voters by census tract.

### Mock Election in Primary and Secondary schools

*Summary:* King County Elections will provide election materials and guidance to support a mock election program. Learning about the elections process through civics programs in schools encourages voting and participation.

*Achievement:* For the first time, King County measures were included in the Washington Secretary of State sponsored 2015 Student Mock Election. Nearly 10,000 students from across Washington State, and nearly one-third in King County, participated in this online voting option. This program is open to all public, private, tribal and homeschool students in grades K-12.

King County sample ballots included:

Initiative 1366

Should the sales tax be lowered if the Legislature doesn't call for a vote on new rules making it harder to raise taxes?

Initiative 1401

Should people who sell endangered animals, or the animals' parts, without permission go to jail?

King County Charter Amendment 1 - Law enforcement oversight

Should King County create a new office responsible for citizen's review of the county police force?

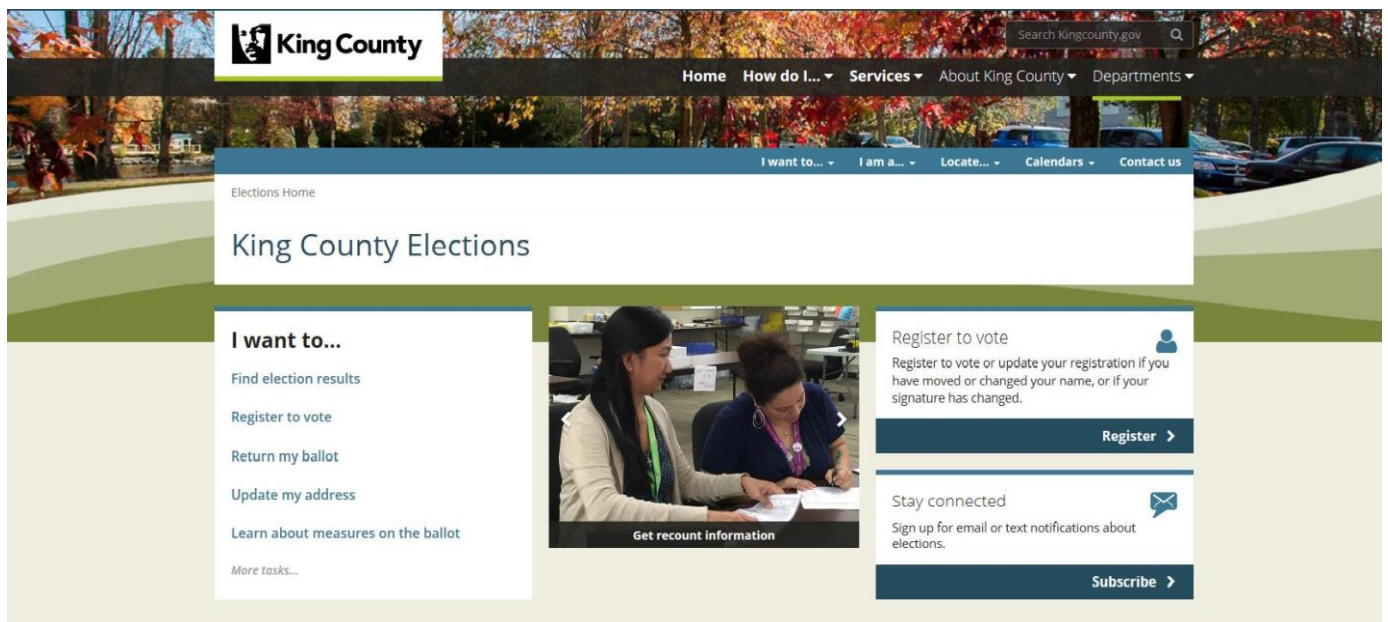
King County Proposition 1 — Best start for Kids levy

Should King County increase property taxes to pay for new health and safety programs and services for young children, teens, and families?

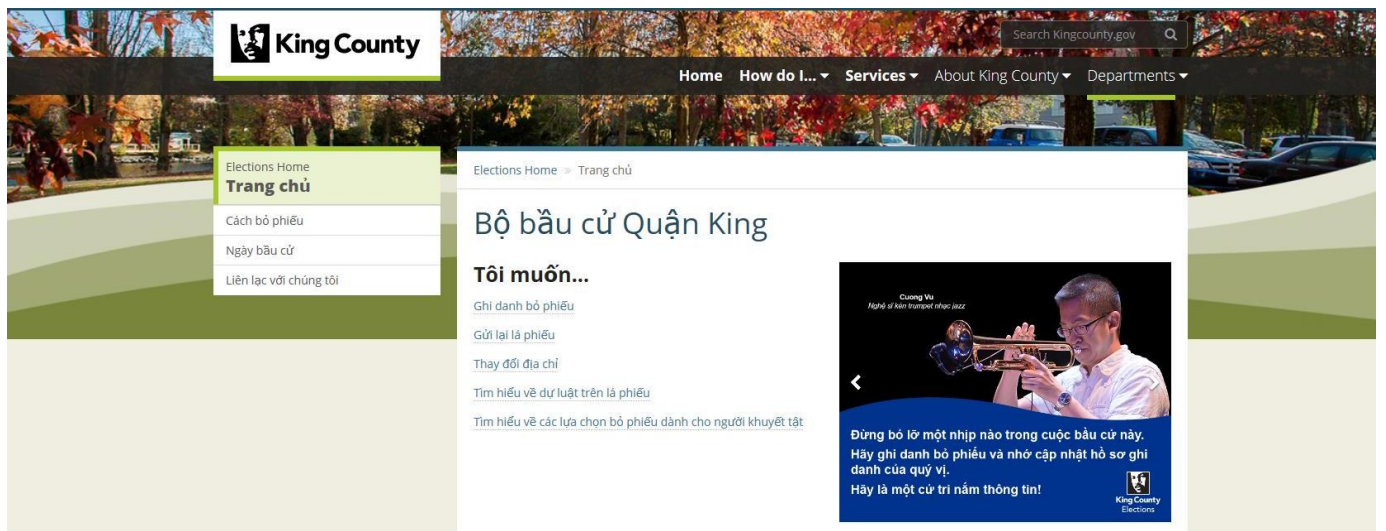
The results from registered King County voters vs. the student voters showed no difference in the outcome of these measures.

## Web redesign and translation

Working alongside KCIT, King County Elections recently launched a new website designed from a user perspective with mobile responsiveness. Pages translated into Chinese and Vietnamese were also launched and will soon be followed by Spanish and Korean translated pages in 2016.







King County Elections appreciates this opportunity to share some of the important work done by this office to engage our communities and in support of our mission statement.

*Mission Statement: With integrity and a commitment to innovation, we provide all citizens the opportunity to participate in and protect the democratic process.*