



## **2023-2025 Maine Speaks Audience Feedback Guidelines**

During our 2023 listening sessions we learned that many of our partners hosting Maine Speaks events felt that our audience evaluations were too cumbersome to implement. As a result, we've eliminated "regular" paper and digital surveys and are asking coordinators to do something a little more interactive and simpler.

### **Audience Dot Polls!**

A dot (or bean, penny, token, tally...) poll is a low-barrier, interactive, and engaging way to learn how folks are thinking and feeling about something. They all have three basic components:

1. A question or prompt posted somewhere very visible
2. A tally collection tool with labels - enough for the number of possible responses. You could use mason jars, paper with columns, bowls, etc.
3. A "tally tool"- something individuals can use to express their vote. This could be pennies, colorful dot stickers, markers, dried beans, marbles, etc.

We're asking you as the coordinator and host of this event to experiment with an Audience Dot Poll that works for you.

Here's all you have to do:

### **Initial decisions**

- Select one or more of the following prompts.
  - I plan to explore ideas, topics, or issues that arose during this event
    - Yes/No/Maybe
  - This event gave me access to a new perspective
    - Yes/No/Maybe
  - This event led me to imagine different possibilities for myself and/or my community
    - Yes/No/Maybe
  - Use your own prompt!\*
  - 3-5 possible responses
- Decide which collection and tally tools are interesting and accessible to you.
- Decide whether you will offer an additional opportunity for folks to explain their responses. For example, an invitation to comment on a post-it note and stick it to a wall or sheet of paper.

- Plan where you'll set up these polls as you set up for your event. Think of easily accessible and prominent locations within your event space. Maybe place containers on a table near the doorway or the top of a bookshelf? Perhaps hang several feet of craft paper on a stretch of wall? Ideally, people should be able to access this without having to walk in front of where the speaker will be.

\* If you decide to use your own prompt, please let us know in advance so we can work with you to ensure it's useful for both of us.

### **Prepare**

- Gather the necessary materials.
  - You'll need one container/column for each response.
  - Plan for more tally tools than you think you'll have attendees. Remember to adjust the amount according to how many prompts you're using.
- Print or write out the prompt(s). Use simple, relatively large font in black or dark ink. Avoid cursive or embellished letters. The goal is to make it easy for people to read relatively quickly.
- Feel free to add other embellishments!

### **Set up**

- Set up your poll as you're setting up for your event. These are quite inviting, so if you set it up too early, you're likely to get responses before you're ready.

### **Invite participation**

- As you welcome folks and introduce the speaker, call attention to the poll(s) and explain how it works. Invite audience members to share their response(s) before they leave.

Example:

"Across the way we have a little poll set up. We're interested in knowing if you plan to explore ideas, topics, or issues that arise during this evening's event. To respond, simply place a sticker (there's a stack near the door) in either the yes, no, or maybe column. We hope everyone will take a moment to respond before leaving."

### **Share your results**

- Please take photos of your poll! Before and after pics are great.
- There's a spot in your coordinator reflection where you can let us know how things went and upload images. You're also welcome to directly email your MHC Point Person.