



Public Television Stations' Education Services

Results from a National Survey

September 2025



Corporation
for Public
Broadcasting

Preface

The Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 established a vision for media to serve “instructional, educational, and cultural purposes”—a vision that public media stations across the U.S. carry out every day. To understand how stations realize this vision—and to gain current insights on local education priorities, emerging trends, and successful models—the Corporation for Public Broadcasting conducted a survey of public media stations’ education work every few years. In this report, we share findings from our 2024 survey.

Following the passage of the Rescissions Act of 2025, which defunded CPB, it may be tempting to read this new report retrospectively, as an historic document. Instead, as stations navigate a future without this federal funding, the report points to station strengths that the system can build on moving forward. It is with this view that we publish this report in September 2025, despite how much has changed since we collected the data in June and July 2024.

Input from community members and partners will continue to play a central role in informing stations’ education strategic planning, as it already does at more than 60 percent of stations. We also learned that nearly all stations partner with a wide range of organizations—including state and local agencies, schools, libraries, workforce boards, and community colleges—to design education programming and activities that meet regional needs. Cross-sector collaboration, among organizations with overlapping missions, will help stations continue to respond to community needs and will likely support sustainable funding models, even as some partner organizations may be affected by funding cuts, too.

The survey findings also suggest ways stations can collaborate with other stations to enhance impact. For example, stations that work closely with their state’s education department can help other stations build similar relationships. As we learned, stations partner with state education departments and other state agencies in nearly every state.

Lastly, nearly half of stations told us last year that they raise at least three-quarters of their education funding from sources other than their station budget, indicating potential sources of resilience in the face of federal funding cuts.

Alongside these strengths, this report highlights some challenges that have particular resonance amid recent funding cuts. Widely reported staff cuts may impact a station’s only staff position dedicated to education. Education programs, content, and activities may be reduced or cut as stations tighten belts across all departments.

Our previous station survey, with data collected in summer 2020, showcased how stations responded to rapidly changing education needs in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. In that survey, we learned that stations were quickly adapting to work with new partners, reorganize staff, and think about their education work in new ways. Now, as stations prepare for the next era of public media, the 2024 survey results indicate stations are poised to continue innovating new ways to serve their communities.

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Introduction

CPB surveyed public television stations in summer 2024 to gain an in-depth picture of their work to support education and learning in their communities. The survey represented an important opportunity to gauge how stations' education strategies have evolved since CPB last fielded a national education survey in 2020 and to gather stations' views on current opportunities and challenges.

Findings representative of the system

CPB invited all 154 public television stations that receive Community Service Grants to take the survey. Of the 154 invited, 134 responded. This report is based on responses from those 134 stations, located in all 50 states and 2 US territories. With an 87% response rate, the findings are representative of the public television system.

Focus on public television stations

While the 2020 survey included both television and radio stations, CPB developed the 2024 survey for television stations only. Television station education services are often quite distinct from those of radio stations, typically with a greater focus on serving parents, educators, and schools. So, including both in the same survey could make it harder to see the unique value of each. Further, to prioritize hearing from stations in their own words, CPB included numerous open-ended questions. This approach resulted in a large amount of qualitative data more feasibly analyzed for the smaller pool of public television stations than for both television and radio stations.

About this report

The report opens with key findings. We then present the findings in more detail, first describing stations' priority topics in education and how stations identify them, the activities stations pursue, and the audiences they serve. We then present the resources that support stations' education services: funding amounts and sources, staffing strategies, and partnerships. Last, we detail how stations measure success in their education efforts.

Each section opens with an overview followed by quotations that illustrate stations' perspectives. We also spotlight a few trends in the data in more depth. We generally anonymized quotations but attributed (with permission) quotations featured in these spotlights.

The trends we present here arise from our analysis of stations' responses to open-ended questions. We identified themes in these responses and tallied occurrences of these themes to generate counts shown throughout the report. (For details, see the survey methods summary.) Totals can exceed the number of responding stations when stations included multiple themes in a single answer. Not all stations answered all questions.



Key Findings

- **Stations rely on community input to shape their education work.** Deep local focus remains at the heart of public media's national mission: Stations draw on input from their communities and local partners to design education activities to serve the unique needs of local children, families, and educators. Stations' education work also enhances communities' sense of place by highlighting local history and voices, exploring local implications of national trends, and supporting regional workforce needs.
- **Stations produce local content to address gaps in educational resources.** Literacy and STEM remain priority topics. Child and youth well-being also emerged as core needs, along with civics, history, social studies, and public affairs.
- **Community events and outreach are key to audience engagement, which largely centers on families and children.** Stations serve audiences of all ages in their education work, but children and youth and the adults who support them—including parents, teachers, and library staff—are most common. To engage these audiences, stations hold events for families and children and provide parent workshops and teacher professional learning. Stations also identified specific segments of their communities for which they are seeking to expand service, for example, by providing printed materials where broadband may be limited or by providing materials in Spanish as well as in English.
- **Many stations raise substantial external funding for education work, but approaches vary widely.** Nearly half of stations raise three quarters or more of their education funding from external sources, while about a third of stations raise a quarter or less externally. Top interests for potential new funders are stations' local focus, their content expertise and the ways they support families and communities, stations reported.
- **Stations report wide-ranging partnerships, including with schools, libraries, workforce boards and community colleges.** Stations demonstrate their value in the wide range of organizations they partner with. Stations also partner with state departments of education in nearly every state and with other state agencies in most states.
- **Education staff regularly collaborate across other station departments to accomplish their goals.** Video production, communication and promotion, and fundraising roles are top internal collaborators, while some education staff collaborate with journalism colleagues.



Priorities in Public Television Stations' Education Service

Planning: How stations identify education goals and activities

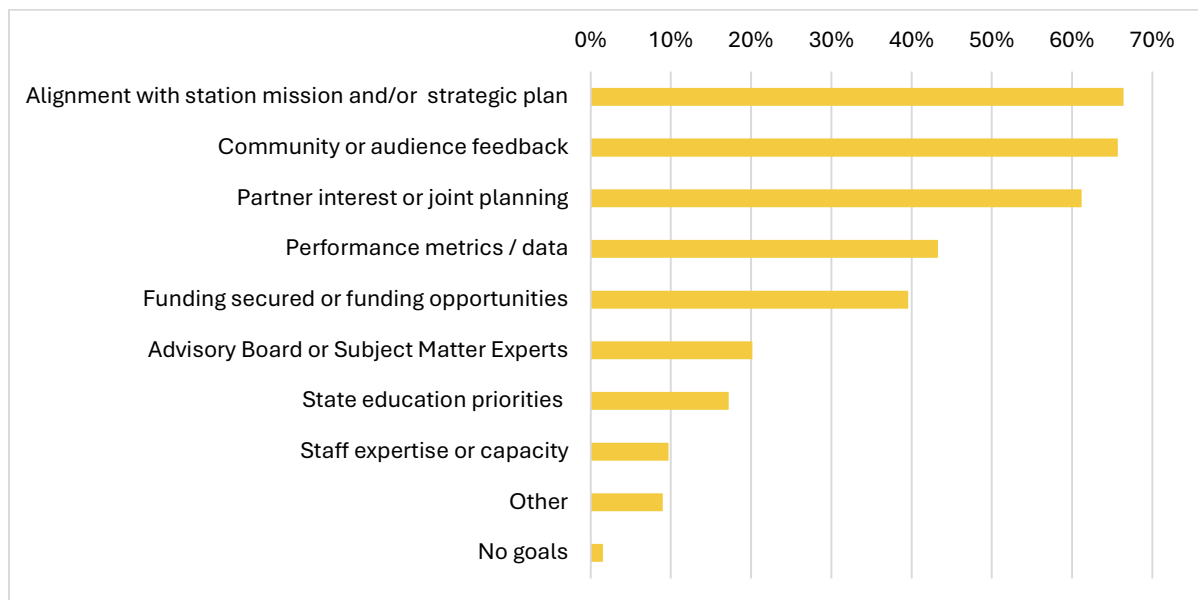
Stations prioritize the communities they serve in determining goals for their education work: Listening to community input or audience feedback, discussing priorities with partners, and assessing alignment with their station's mission and/or strategic plan were top-reported factors.

About **4 in 10** stations reported that they analyze performance metrics, ranging from reach numbers to evaluation findings, and other publicly available data, to inform their goals. A similar number acknowledged that funding opportunities were an important factor in deciding whether to pursue new efforts or pointed to fundraising successes in deciding to continue a given project.

Smaller numbers of stations draw on insights from advisory groups such as Community Advisory Boards, Education Committees, or their leadership and board, or from subject matter experts. Stations in **19 states** reported they consider state education priorities (Figure 1).

Stations reported considering an average of four factors. Here and throughout the report, counts can exceed the number of responding stations where stations responded in multiple ways to a given question.

Figure 1. Factors stations consider in determining education goals (N=134)





“Partner interest mostly—however, goals are shifting for Y25 and more aligned with funding opportunities.”

“We saw a gap in the PBS [LearningMedia] resources available for educators and have the expertise on staff to create a collection. It aligns very strongly with our mission. As a statewide public media station, our focus is on supporting [our state’s] teachers and students. We participate in state standard creation processes and follow associated legislation to ensure that we are creating and providing content that is in full alignment.”

“Our goals are mostly driven by alignment to our station’s mission and strategic plan. We look towards stakeholder input, community feedback, funding opportunities, and partner interests to help guide our activities and programmatic objectives that align with our goals.”

Most important topics and content areas

In stations’ open-ended responses, literacy and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) were commonly reported priorities, reflecting an ongoing focus on core academic needs from early learning through high school. Child and youth mental health, and skills that help children “learn to learn”—such as communication, collaboration, self-management, and executive function—were also prevalent, indicating an expanding focus in these areas.

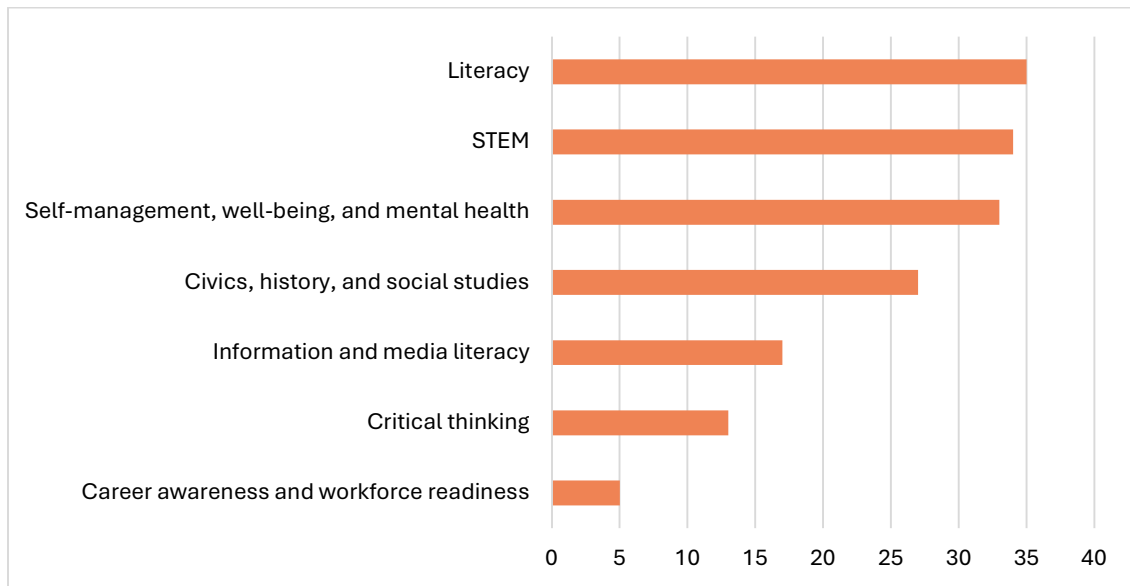
Civics, history, social studies, and public affairs emerged as another key focus. This illustrates stations’ development of media-rich learning materials tied to state standards—for example, related to Native American history and culture—as well as their broader goals to inform audiences about current events, foster dialogue, and highlight local history.

Stations that identified information and media literacy as a top priority did not all use these terms the same way. Some described efforts to help educators (usually of younger children) to integrate educational media into their teaching in developmentally appropriate ways. Others used the term to encompass digital citizenship, online safety, and skills for evaluating the credibility and quality of online sources.

Career awareness and workforce readiness were priority topics for a small number of stations. These topics align with current priorities in the CPB-PBS Ready To Learn Initiative and CPB’s American Graduate: Jobs Explained program (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Number of stations that identified content area as most important (n=132)



How stations define priority topics and content areas in education

The numbers appear relatively small for each of these priority areas because some stations defined their priorities through another lens. For example, some offered broader terms such as “early childhood education” or an activity, such as “teacher professional development.” Those responses are not included in Figure 2 but instead are counted in the audiences and activities sections below.

“One of our major goals is to increase caregiver confidence to support families as their children are preparing for and attending school. We know that school readiness is a major concern throughout the country, including in [our region]. In fact, kindergarten assessment data from Fall 2023 shows that 47% of rising kindergarteners in [our region] did not meet age level early literacy goals. [We are] increasing caregiver confidence by providing caregivers with resources, tips, and materials that help build background information for families and children. We create a variety of engagements, resources, and educational content to support caregivers in simple everyday activities and practices they can implement to help their child be ready to begin their school journey and to support classroom learning at home.”

“Civics and social studies topics. Kindergarten readiness continues to be an area of focus – working directly with parents and early childhood educators. [Our station] continues its focus on supporting adult learners as they study for and earn their high school equivalency diplomas with our [...] online system.”



“Teacher professional development, K12 curriculum-aligned programming, and educational outreach training and events.”

“[We have] an active role in producing, presenting, and distributing our award-winning documentaries that focus primarily within a historical and/or environmental genre. While we focus on storytelling that resonates and is connected with our [region’s] audience, our decision on subject matter also accounts for national appeal with the goal to share these educational stories with other PBS affiliates. While we consider our originally produced documentaries to be educational and entertaining for our television audiences, our most important area related directly to education and learning work is the mission to create and make available to teachers and students our Companion Film Study Guides and Lesson Plans designed around the stories we produce.”

Several also commented that survey responses reflect only one part of their station’s cross-cutting education mission:

“‘Using media to educate’ is core to PBS and [our station’s] missions. It is built into the content that we produce and the news that we report. Our education team is just one component of the larger picture of what we do all day every day to help educate our community.”

“This survey only represents the work around education and learning carried out by our Grants and Education department. [We have] a news department where the majority of their journalist content could be seen as education. We are interested in expanding our learning and education but currently do not have the bandwidth to expand this work.”

“Tip of the iceberg” view

The survey asked stations to select one or two most important education topics or content areas, and then to provide in-depth information about their efforts related to those topics or content areas—not to list every education activity. As a result, the report presents more detailed findings about education efforts that stations identified as most important, rather than a broad view of all station education activity nationally.

Audiences in Priority Topics and Content Areas

Reflecting stations’ missions to support lifelong learning, stations identified a range of educators and learners as audiences for priority education work, including adult audiences. But service to the youngest learners comes first for about two-thirds of stations. Most stations defined education audiences in terms that follow the formal education progression—PreK through college.



Most stations (about two-thirds) prioritize bringing public media resources to their area's youngest learners through the adults in their lives, especially parents and early childhood educators. K-12 teachers and students, youth, and young adults were the next most common audiences, stations reported, along with library staff and other out-of-school-time educators.

A third of stations identified audiences by community characteristics (such as rural communities or Spanish speakers) or people's relationship to the topic (such as people interested in state history or local ecosystems). These stations often produce accompanying educational materials to support locally focused content (Table 1).

Table 1. Number of times stations mentioned audiences for most important topics or content areas (n=132)

Audiences	Mentions
Families	84
Parents and caregivers	84
Educators	165
Early childhood educators/childcare providers	68
K-12 teachers and others in K-12 schools	56
Library staff or other informal learning educators	31
Schools and districts	10
Students and youth	125
PreK and students in grades K-2	67
Students in grades 4-12, youth, college students, and young adults	58
Service area	61
Characteristics specific to service area or state	44
General audience	17
Other	15

“The target demographic includes those individuals with low income or those who are underserved, specifically with children aged 0-10. This includes residents in rural areas who lack access to fiber optic internet due to financial constraints or unavailability.”

“Pre K- 5th Grade students and families. High School Students and educators [in our metro area] and rural schools.”

“Those who can most benefit from knowledge of and access to these resources—families experiencing low incomes, child care providers and educators working in communities with higher needs. Parents, teachers, caregivers, children.”



“Educators—formal in schools, Head Starts, and child care centers; Informal educators at home; Parents, grandparents and other family members helping raise young children and prepare them for success in school; K-12 educators, students, home school families, school systems (public, charter, private), and education agencies.”

“There are several pillars that comprise our workforce development initiative [...] and each has a target audience. These include teachers, parents and caregivers of students engaged in career-planning discussions, and students from middle school through college and trade school. Our workforce development materials also appeal to other audiences as well, including older adults reentering the workforce, but we have not specifically targeted that population when developing this initiative. We also seek to serve the rapidly growing Spanish-speaking population in our region.”

Content, programming, and activities related to priority education topics

Nearly a third of stations (29%) consider their content, programming, and activities their greatest strength in education and learning. Outreach and engagement efforts were most common, followed by locally produced resources and capacity-building activities.

Most stations (about 4 in 5) reported conducting outreach and engagement efforts in their communities. These range from large community events such as Be My Neighbor Days, to story times at local libraries or the station, and book or learning resource distributions.

About half of stations described producing content around their education priorities—including video, websites, and learning materials and content for broadcast. A few stations produce podcasts, social media, and radio content tied to their top education priorities. Stations also integrate national media assets into local education services.

About half of stations described leading capacity-building activities, such as educator professional learning, parent workshops, and youth internship programs. A small number mentioned convening community advisory boards to support their most important topics or content areas.

More frequent mentions of local production than of national content reflect that, for many stations, local production plays a role in their current, top-priority education and learning projects (Table 2).



Table 2. Number of mentions of content, programming, and activities for most important topics or content areas (n=132)

Content, programming, and activities for most important topics or content areas	Mentions
Outreach and engagement efforts	105
Community	54
Family	51
Educator	43
Programs in school or out-of-school settings	41
Parent	30
Kit or Book Distribution	25
Resources for K-12 teachers or students	20
Student	5
Local production	78
Digital	59
Broadcast or unspecified content	43
Podcast	9
Social	9
Radio	6
Capacity-building or development efforts	76
Educator professional learning	55
Parent capacity building	30
Youth development	20
Advisory groups	5
National content	37
PBS KIDS	28
Broadcast/general audience	9
Other	7
Other	16



“Literacy is a component of all of our family engagement workshops, regardless of the topic. We always share a read-aloud related to the topic or theme of the workshop and every family who attends receives a book to take home to extend the learning. We also provide 10 books to every Title I Pre-K student [in the district] to complement the classroom curriculum. Last school year, we distributed 122,534 books.”

“Kids Festivals for young children [at which] 30 organizations provided hands-on learning activities. Academic quiz show for high school students (have awarded \$530,000 in scholarships). Preschool programming schedule, PBS LearningMedia.”



“We partner with [local school districts] and the College Board to host an AP Summer Institute that provides rigorous training for teachers who teach, or strive to teach, Advanced Placement courses. This is the only institute of its kind in our region and the content varies each summer - Biology, Economics, Forensics, Physics, etc... Also, District and community partner collaborations to adapt the [State] Pre-K Guidelines and Early Childhood Outcomes into parent-friendly resources; create content and resources to help families understand what children need to know to succeed in kindergarten on day one; host community events and share resources that help families develop kindergarten readiness skills through fun and engaging games.”

Spotlight: Workforce development in Northeast and central Pennsylvania

“WVIA produces content and other resources for parents, students, and teachers to spotlight skills needed in the region’s labor market and the careers those skills fuel.

Careers that Work/Carreras que funcionan is the bilingual umbrella program under which the main three pillars (educational video content, curriculum, social media engagement) reside. This initiative is a regional, workforce development enterprise including the broad communication of research-based, geographic workforce needs with accompanying educational materials and social media engagement. All of the Careers that Work/Carreras que funcionan content is available for free [on our website and] we are currently working with our PBS Learning Media content manager to finalize the upload of all of the videos and curriculum to PBS Learning Media.

In response to the rapidly changing demographics of our region of Pennsylvania, WVIA Education developed an Education Bilingual Advisory Board two years ago. These active members of the vibrant Hispanic/Latino communities in Northeastern Pennsylvania and beyond provide vital guidance on WVIA Education initiatives as we seek to best serve the members of the Spanish-Speaking community. This Board guided us through the initial development of Careers that Work/Carreras que funcionan and continues to guide us as this initiative expands. Our Be My Neighbor Day bilingual outreach and language ambassadors were developed with advice from this Board. Incidentally, the Board’s work is expanding to offer guidance to our marketing, WVIA News and content teams as we continue to develop a partnership with a local Spanish radio station and seek a bilingual reporter and editor to be hired in the next month.”



Spotlight: Supporting state standards with resources on PBS LearningMedia

While some stations design media-rich learning materials for national audiences on PBS LearningMedia, others develop assets aligned to their own states' standards—in history, social studies, civics, or the arts—filling gaps that large curriculum publishers do not address. Stations reported featuring these materials on their own websites as well as on PBS LearningMedia.

When South Dakota recently updated its elementary social studies standards to extend social studies learning into each elementary grade, teachers had little to work with. South Dakota Public Broadcasting stepped in, creating resources on state history aligned to the new standards. The station has also created collections to support state standards for learning about Native American peoples and culture in the state and continues to partner with the South Dakota Department of Education on its History Hub resource project.

Capitalizing on an *“an opportunity to create content that addresses the specific gaps in resources”* in Montana, Montana PBS developed a “Parks of Montana” collection with *“support materials and videos about rock formations, archeology, water sheds, buffalo jumps, pictographs, dams, superfund sites and more”* featuring six parks throughout the state. The station reports that *“teachers who take their classes on field trips to these parks love these resources and tell us that they meet a need for high quality media about places in their community.”* By engaging film graduate students to create the content, the station additionally supports young people's budding media careers.

Overall, 4 in 10 stations (40%) reported they contribute resources to PBS LearningMedia, while almost two-thirds (63%) reported they use the site. Most of these stations share and promote resources from the site, while a smaller number train educators on how to access and use the site's materials.



Resources: Funding, Staffing, Partnerships

Stations' ability to pursue education projects is shaped by available resources: funding, staff expertise and capacity, and partner interest and support are all key.

Funding

Nearly half of stations (44%) report raising three-quarters or more of their education budgets from sources other than their station's operating budget, while about a third (36%) raise a quarter or less of their total education budget from other sources.

Internal collaboration with development staff is key to education fundraising. While 60% of stations engaged a new funder in the past year, stations where development staff have primary responsibility for education fundraising were more likely to have done so. But primary responsibility for education fundraising varies: Development staff have this role at about 40% of stations, while education staff (reported by 25%) or General Managers (reported by 15%) hold this responsibility elsewhere.

Nationally, stations remained optimistic about education funding. Nearly all (88%) say they anticipate funding will increase or remain the same in the next 3-5 years, with half saying they expect funding will increase. Stations offered several reasons for this optimism, including new grants or recently submitted proposals, or increased interest in their work from funders or community leaders.

What matters to funders, according to stations

Stations report that their local focus, their expertise in a given topic or content area, and the ways they support families and communities were top interests for new funders they engaged in the past year.

- ” *“Ability to reach and serve families in languages other than English.”*
- “ *“The impact in rural, tribal, and high-need communities as well as the research/evidence base supporting the content.”*
- “Workforce development for 25-39 year olds in underserved communities.”*
- “Our attendance during community events and our presence in the school district.”*
- “Our work with families in low-income areas and the educational opportunities that we offer.”*
- “Projects focused on health and mental health of children.”*



Station staff and contractors

Education staff collaborate internally as well as with contractors and partners to carry out stations' education work. Nearly a quarter of stations (22%) have more than four full-time roles dedicated to education, but most have less than one full-time role.

Limited staff is one reason internal collaboration is critical. Other station staff—most often from video production, awareness, and fundraising roles, and less commonly from journalism roles—collaborate with education colleagues at 81% of stations.

“It is central to our strategy that our work thrives at the intersection of journalism, education, and production. We collaborate regularly. Because we traditionally represent different industries, our best innovation and growth happens when we are in the room together!”

“The Education Department collaborates with members of [our] Production, Marketing, and Digital Strategies, and IT departments. All of these collaborations are critical to success of our education initiatives.”

“Early learning is a cornerstone of our organization's mission, underscored in our published strategy and future vision outlined in Vision 2030. This priority permeates throughout our entire organization, with dedicated efforts from teams across marketing, creative services, business intelligence, communications, digital, impact and partnerships, and production.”

Internal collaboration can also support continuity when stations onboard new staff. Nearly half of all education staff have been in their role four years or less. At 33 stations, no education staff member has been in their role more than two years. Some stations reported that uncompetitive salaries make it hard to retain new hires. At many stations, however, newer staff are balanced by long-serving team members: nearly a quarter of all education staff (22%) have been in their role more than 10 years.

Despite limitations of few and newer education staff, stations are proud of what their education staff accomplish: for 31% of stations, education staff are the station's greatest strength in education and learning. Top reasons were the credibility, access, and connections that staff's expertise and relationships afforded stations, along with their varied skills and backgrounds. Several stations cited the expertise of former teachers among their staff.

Stations learning from stations

In describing professional learning needs, more than a quarter of stations (28%) indicated they are eager to connect with other similar stations. Looking across the survey findings, we note that some stations excel at the skills others identify as needs, underscoring the benefits of stations learning from one another.



Use of contractors

More than half of stations (60%) rely on contractors in their education services work, most often for help producing content—including roles across all aspects of digital production, as well as developing materials for teachers, and newsletter or social media management. The second most common reason is for help leading events, including instructional support for professional learning or workshops for families.

Most stations that use contractors reported engaging multiple people, following a strategy one station described as having “smaller number of FTE with a heavy reliance on intermittent temporary employees.”

“*[We] contracted a teacher to serve as coordinator of the Digital Summer Camp. The coordinator developed the structure and timing for activities and works with the students throughout the camp.*”

“We rely on contracted producers to support youth voice projects for teens and young adults.”

“Currently, [we have] 2 contractors who function as team members, one at about 75% of full time, another at about 50%. [They] work on outreach, PD, production, resource development, website upkeep. Funding cuts led to a reduction in contract hours. This heavy reliance on contractors leads to uncertainty and instability.”

Partnerships

Partnerships are another key lever for extending stations’ capacity and impact in education. Not surprisingly, nearly all stations (99%) consider partnerships important to their education and learning work.

Overall, stations reported partnering with more than 20 different types of organizations—11 per station on average—ranging from libraries and schools to workforce boards, nonprofits that support seniors, or housing authorities.

When asked about their greatest strength in education and learning, more than half of stations (52%) pointed to partnerships and their connections with the community, their state, or local universities.

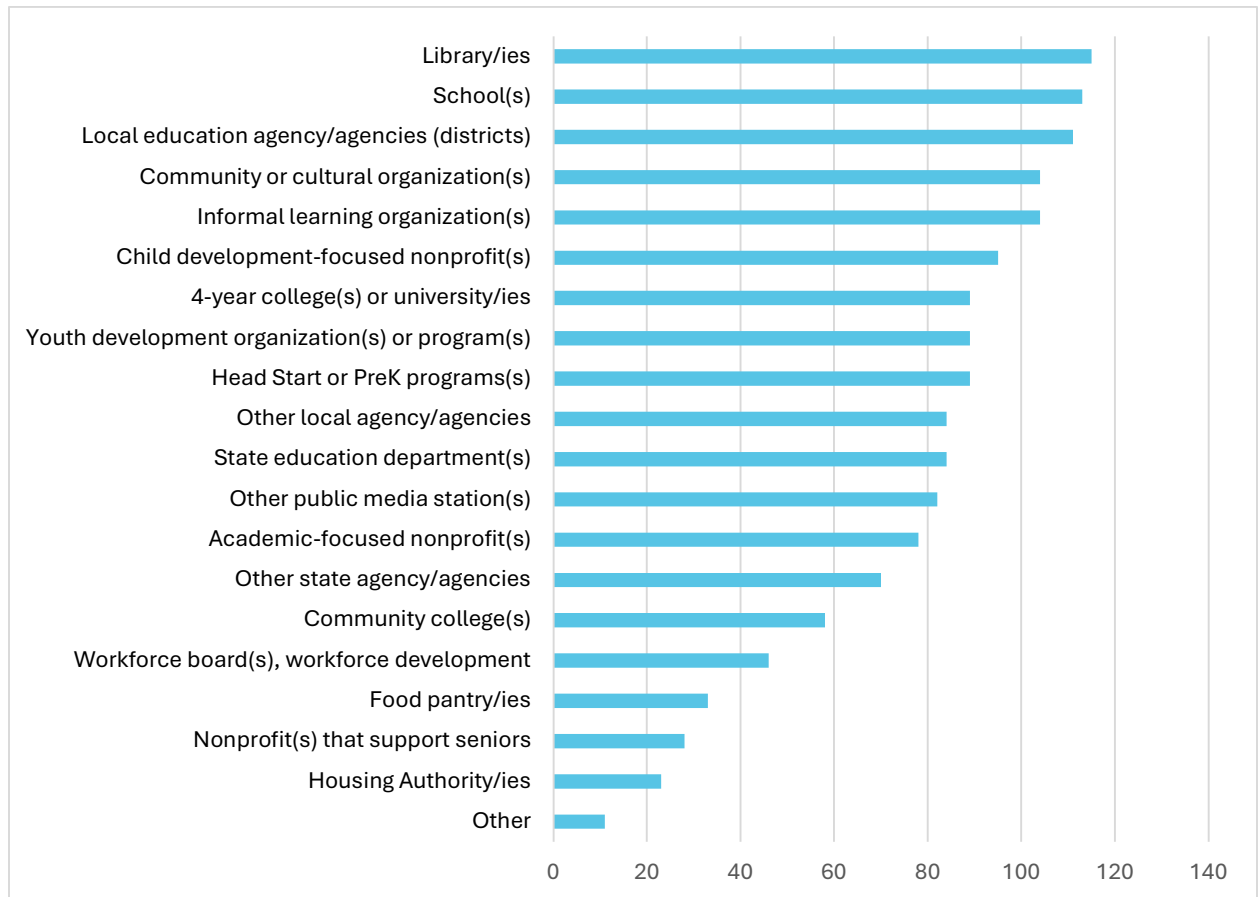
Partner types

Consistent with stations’ dominant focus on families and educators in the education projects they reported on, more than four in five stations reported partnering with libraries (87%), schools (86%), and school districts (84%). Interestingly, even less common partner types are fairly prevalent—for example, nearly half of stations (44%) partner with community colleges, while more than a third (35%) partner with workforce boards or workforce development organizations.



State agencies also emerged as a key feature of the public media partner landscape—an increase perhaps influenced by stations’ education role in the pandemic. Stations that count state education departments among their partners (64%) do so in 44 states and 2 US territories; more than half of stations (53%) said they partner with other state agencies (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Number of stations partnering with each type of organization (n=132)



National trends in station partnerships

- 115 stations partner with **libraries** in 48 states and 2 US territories.
- 111 stations partner with **school districts** in 46 states and 2 US territories.
- 84 stations partner with **state education departments** in 44 states and 2 US territories.
- 70 stations partner with **other state agencies** in 36 states and 2 US territories.

Partner roles

Partners help stations by promoting their education activities and by connecting them with new communities and audiences. Partners also jointly identify opportunities with stations, develop and implement activities, and jointly develop funding proposals. Stations value that partners provide resources such as space for events or staff to support an event.



“Workforce Solutions, United Way, YWCA/YMCA, region school districts, city libraries—with these collaborations, we have fantastic locations to hold events, we have the right voices in the room to help us understand family and district needs, and we have access to resources.”

“We collaborate with several local businesses to produce virtual field trips. To date we have produced 150 field trips at different sites over 15 years in our tri-county area. [...] We collaborate with event locations to organize several family events throughout the year. These include science museums, libraries, and schools.”

“Our partnership with the [state family engagement center] aims to make educational resources for families available statewide, particularly in areas served by Title I schools. The partnership includes production of interstitials that educate families on [navigating school terminology such as] School Improvement Council, PTA, IEP, IGP meeting, etc. The partnership also includes creating Community Family Resource Centers stocked with high quality information and resources to support learning and development and located where families already travel to access essential goods and services.”

“Community conveners with similar missions such as community colleges, public libraries and workforce development partner agencies, [and] committees that offer free community engagement and learning events and opportunities and see value in including public media education. We work with them to offer screening/talkbacks, family learning events, career exploration events for youth.”



Spotlight: Partnering with state education departments and other state agencies

Relationships with state education departments and other state agencies surfaced throughout stations' survey responses. Nineteen stations mentioned input from state education leaders as a factor in determining education goals. Eight stations—not all state licensees—call their collaboration with their state education departments or other agencies their greatest strength in education. As one stated, *“our strength is our strong relationships with community and state partners, including several state agencies.”* Stations described the benefits of these partnerships as follows.

“The Georgia Department of Education is our strongest partner in education. Not only do they fund education projects, but the ability to collaborate with their content managers lends credibility and trust and ensures proper alignment with state standards, goals, and priorities.” (Georgia Public Broadcasting)

“WITF coordinates and delivers teacher professional learning in ELD/ESL [English language development/English as a second language] education on behalf of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Annually, we engage more than 8,000 educators in 321 school districts across 45 Pennsylvania counties via PD workshops and a national conference.” (WITF)

“A recent partnership that has been important to our work in Education is with the Idaho Department of Education. We have connected with most of the content area coordinators who really have their fingers on the pulse of the education needs in Idaho. We’ve also connected with the communications specialists who put content that we submit in their newsletter, which is distributed to parents, teachers, and administrators statewide. We recently received funds to produce history [learning resources] based on Idaho’s 4th grade history standards.” (Idaho PBS)

“Arizona PBS serves as the administrative home (on behalf of First Things First) for the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce and Professional Development Registry. This system collects data for individual educators on their professional growth, offers advancement opportunities through college coursework, degrees, and professional development (PD). [...] Individuals use their data housed here to keep track of recertification hours, but state agencies use this data to show the health and well-being of the early childhood education system.” (Arizona PBS)

“Working with a state agency, Alabama Learning Exchange, has allowed us to reach more teachers across the state. Also, our partnership with Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) has provided us with crucial funding to support a majority of our Early Childhood Education team.” (Alabama Public Television)

“We partner with county naturalists and Iowa Department of Natural Resources to help coordinate our educational trainings around Iowa Science Phenomena. This has been very beneficial for us as they help get the educators in those key places for identifying local science phenomena.” (Iowa Public Television)



Measuring Success

About four in five (81%) of 134 reporting stations measure the success of their education work. Participant counts and participant surveys are top ways stations measure success of their education work, along with anecdotal or written feedback. This approach reflects that outreach and engagement events are the most common activity associated with stations' priority education work. Smaller numbers of stations review digital metrics to gauge success, including those from websites, PBS LearningMedia, social media, YouTube, or e-newsletters.

Stations use the data they gather for three main purposes:

- to improve content and activities
- to communicate results to funders—to report progress to current funders and to seek new funds
- to communicate results to other stakeholders, including station leaders and boards, partners, local or state policymakers, and community members.

Stations largely use the same metrics to communicate their success to partners and funders as they do to communicate success to station leaders and boards.

” *“Attendance. We track attendance to measure the number of children and families participating in our programs and event turnout.”*

“ *“We share a monthly summary with our leadership team that is combined with other departments and emailed out internally. We have a few whole station meetings a year and we share briefly via those experiences. Also, we meet with other departments and make sure they are aware of what we are up to as often as possible.”*

“We demonstrate success in a more fluid and forward-thinking way, such as looking at quality of partnerships developed and the impact community relationships have on continuing our programs, whether that's supporting capacity or increasing funding.”

Measuring success—gathering relevant data and using it in decision making or conducting an evaluation—is one area in which stations could benefit from collaboration, since some stations excel at it while others indicated related professional learning or capacity needs.



Survey Methods

Survey design

To minimize the burden on stations, CPB asked stations to identify their most important education content, programming, or activities, and asked a series of questions related to those priorities. While we used quantitative (close-ended) questions where possible, we also used numerous qualitative (open-ended) questions to gain insights into how stations talk about their education work, staffing, partnerships, funding, and measurement approaches in their own words. We used skip logic to enable respondents to skip questions not relevant to their work and indicated this skip logic on the Word document distributed with the link to the online survey form. The final survey incorporated input from several stations CPB asked to review the draft survey.

Determining the universe

CPB identified 158 television stations that receive Community Service Grants. Of those, four pairs of stations opted to submit a single survey together, leaving 154 possible responses.

Survey programming, administration, and follow-up

CPB programmed the survey in Microsoft Forms, conducting multiple rounds of testing prior to launch. To prepare for launch, we developed a database of names and emails for all General Managers and education leads at each station; we included only General Managers for three stations where we could not identify an education lead.

We announced the survey by email to all contacts, and in the NETA newsletter, one week before launch. For convenience and to encourage people to collaborate with station colleagues on their responses, we attached a Word version of the online survey form to the announcement email and all subsequent emails. We formally launched the survey via email with a link to the Microsoft Form on June 25, then sent general and individually tailored follow-up emails to stations that had not yet responded July 2 through July 19, prior to closing the survey July 22, 2024.

Response rate

We received responses from 134 of the total pool of 154, including stations in all 50 states and two U.S. territories—an 87% response rate. Stations that did not respond are diverse in size, geographic location, urbanicity, and licensee type, underscoring that the results are representative of the public television system.

Respondent roles and survey collaboration

Most respondents (57%) identified as education leaders or staff. About a quarter (27%) identified as stations' top executives, while the remaining respondents identified as leaders or staff in other departments. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) reported collaborating with colleagues to complete the survey.



Data cleaning procedures and analysis

To create our final analysis dataset of 134 responses, we first combined records for three stations that submitted duplicate responses. To do this, we reviewed each response in both surveys for these three instances. Where different values were reported for quantitative items, we selected what we judged to be the most accurate response and discarded the other response. For duplicate but similar qualitative responses, we kept the most complete response and discarded the other response. For dissimilar duplicate qualitative responses, we concatenated the responses to that question and treated the combined responses as a single response for analysis.

For data quality assurance for quantitative items, we included validation checks at the programming stage. Prior to analysis, we reviewed all responses to ensure internal consistency within each survey. When we were unsure about a response, we followed up with the respondent by email to confirm a given answer was intended and made corrections as needed. Once we cleaned the data, we generated basic descriptive statistics and calculated correlations among variables of interest.

We coded qualitative items using an inductive approach to identify themes and outliers and identify corresponding codes. We then coded the data per the schema and generated counts to enable quantitative as well as qualitative representations of findings. For most items, we coded responses multiple times if data corresponded with multiple codes. For a few items (e.g., job title), we associated each response with only one code so the total would match the number of respondents.

We generally calculated the total number of qualitative responses to a given question as the total number of non-blank responses. However, for questions to which stations would not logically respond if the question did not apply to their work (such as “If you rely on contractors in your education and learning work, please describe their roles and level of effort”), we used as the denominator the whole set of possible responses.

Reporting

Consistent with the survey consent, CPB anonymized quotations in this report but attributed with permission quotations included in spotlights featured throughout.

Kea Anderson wrote this report in collaboration with Debra Sanchez, Michael Fragale, and Sarah Bean. Anderson led survey design and analysis in partnership with Maaz Abbasi, Sarah Bean, and Claire English. Matt Knapp designed the final report based on a palette developed by Desiree Arriola.