

Early Voting Update: Republicans Widen Countywide Lead as Democrats Hold Lincolnton

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LINCOLNTON, N.C. — Early voting continues to draw strong participation across Lincoln County as updated figures from the Lincoln County Board of Elections show 14,898 ballots cast through Monday, October 26, ahead of the November 3 general election.

The latest numbers show registered Republicans expanding their countywide turnout advantage while registered Democrats continue to maintain a narrow lead among voters participating in the City of Lincolnton election.

According to the county's unofficial early voting report, registered Republicans account for 6,450 ballots compared to 3,534 cast by registered Democrats. Another 4,881 ballots have been cast by unaffiliated voters along with 29 Libertarians and four Green Party voters.

That gives Republicans a countywide participation advantage of 2,916 ballots over Democrats. The Republican lead has grown considerably since our previous Lincoln Herald report on October 22, when the advantage stood at 1,228 ballots.

However, the story remains different when looking specifically at ballots cast in the City of Lincolnton election.

Of the 1,237 city ballots recorded through October 26, registered Democrats account for 466 compared to 406 registered Republicans. Another 361 ballots came from unaffiliated voters with four ballots from voters registered with other parties.

That gives registered Democrats a 60-ballot advantage among city voters, nearly identical to the 62-ballot advantage reported in our previous article.

The updated report also provides a breakdown of participation at Lincoln County's three early voting locations.

The East Lincoln location continues to lead with 8,079 ballots cast. Republicans account for 3,368 of those ballots followed by 2,947 unaffiliated voters and 1,748 Democrats. The remaining 16 ballots came from Libertarian and Green Party voters.

At the West Lincoln location, 1,851 ballots have been cast, including 934 Republicans, 503 unaffiliated voters and 412 Democrats. Two ballots came from Libertarian voters.

The Board of Elections location in Lincolnton has recorded 4,968 ballots. Of those, 2,148 were cast by registered Republicans, 1,431 by unaffiliated voters and 1,374 by registered Democrats. Another 15 came from Libertarian and Green Party voters.

Interestingly, while Republicans lead overall participation at the Board of Elections location, that site also accounts for the overwhelming majority of ballots cast in the City of Lincolnton election. Of the 1,237 city ballots recorded, 1,196 were cast at the Board of Elections location, 33 at the West Lincoln location and

eight at the East Lincoln location.

Unaffiliated voters continue to play a significant role in the election. Their 4,881 ballots represent approximately one-third of countywide early voting participation, making them a substantial part of the electorate.

The busiest day recorded so far was Monday, October 19, when 2,069 voters cast ballots countywide. Voting has remained steady, with another 1,859 ballots reported on Monday, October 26.

While these numbers offer an interesting picture of voter participation, they do not reveal which candidates are receiving votes. The figures reflect voters' party registration, not their choices on the ballot. Republicans can vote for Democrats, Democrats can vote for Republicans and unaffiliated voters can support candidates from either party.

What the figures do show is that Republican turnout continues to outpace Democratic turnout countywide while the City of Lincolnton election continues to show a much closer division between the two major parties.

With several days of early voting remaining, those numbers could still change before Election Day.

Early voting continues through Saturday, October 31, with Election Day scheduled for Tuesday, November 3.

The Lincoln Herald will continue monitoring the numbers and reporting updates as Lincoln County voters head to the polls.

Source: Lincoln County Board of Elections, 2026 General Election Daily Early Voting Reports through October 26, 2026. All figures are unofficial.