

Before a Campaign Begins: Mobilizing Your Resources

Children's Funding Institute
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Seattle, Washington



PRE-CAMPAIGN: WHEN MOST WORK IS DONE

Importance of Maximizing Your Resources

- Leads to stronger measure
- Builds engaged leadership and infrastructure for campaign
- Trains the troops
- Educates the public and builds support
- Minimizes opposition
- Saves money on campaign



ELEMENTS OF PRE-CAMAPA IGN WORK

- Research
- Building the coalition
- Budget advocacy
- Developing legislation
- Educating the public
- Getting on the ballot

NOTE: All can be paid with 501.(c)(3) dollars, except “getting on ballot”



RESEARCH – 6 – 8 MONTHS

Need

- Data on unmet need and problems of children, youth and families
- Current and needed spending

Revenue Options

- Political, legal, practical feasibility
- Input from lawyers, policy experts and public officials (e.g., Assessor)

Public support

- Poll (and possibly focus groups) on public priorities and revenue options
- Input from politicians, civic groups, etc. review of previous measures



ORGANIZE COALITION - ONGOING

- Start with core group (5 – 20 people) – must staff regular meetings, do “homework” between meetings, etc.
- Conduct outreach to expand group
 - Presentations, meetings, community events
 - Individual meetings with community influencers
 - Voter contact – door-to-door, tabling
- Solicit political support and leverage supporters to understand political landscape – meetings with elected officials and political clubs and groups, use local elections to raise issues, educate public and enlist political support.



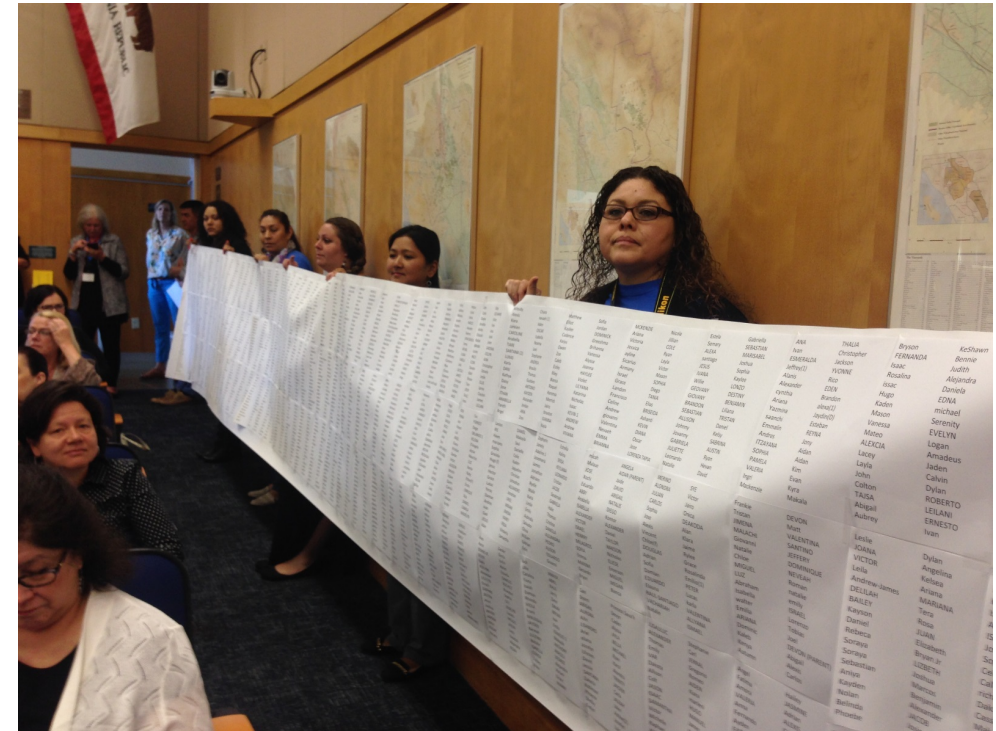
CORE TO SUCCESS - Building a relationship of trust, transparency and “sharing the load” across the core group.



EDUCATE THE PUBLIC AND POLICYMAKERS

ONGOING

- Media and social media
- Public events – meetings, rallies, picnics, conferences, etc.
- Testimony at public forums



BUDGET ADVOCACY (OPTIONAL) – 6 – 12 months

- Begin by participating in the local budget process to gain information and credibility in the fiscal arena.
- Fight for some small wins that can lay the groundwork and rationale for ballot measure.



DEVELOP PROPOSAL FOR MEASURE – 6 MONTHS

- Look to other communities for examples – need not start from scratch.
- Establish consensus on major elements of measure with sponsoring coalition – meetings, surveys, negotiations.
- Engage lawyer to assist with drafting even if city/county attorney will draft final version.
- Consider everything from services to be funded, revenue stream, administration of fund, oversight process and entity, public engagement in planning and the all-important **Name of Fund.**



GETTING ON THE BALLOT – 4 – 12 months

VOTER INITIATIVE

- SUBMITTING MEASURE TO CITY/COUNTY
- GATHERING SIGNATURES
- MONITORING QUALIFICATION PROCESS, INCLUDING DRAFTING OF BALLOT QUESTION

CITY OR COUNTY LEGISLATIVE BODY

- WORKING WITH LEGISLATORS
- NEGOTIATING WITH CITY/COUNTY ATTORNEY
- MOBILIZING FOR HEARINGS
- PROVIDING TESTIMONY



RESOURCES NEEDED FOR PRE-CAMPAI GN

- Convening/backbone organization
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Legal support
- Marketing, events
- Getting on ballot, signatures



Pre-campaign Resources Needed



Convening/backbone organization

- Credibility with all/most sectors of the network
- Can be existing organization or newly-formed coalition/organization – can change mid-stream
- Capacity to manage “steering committee” and ensure implementation of pre-campaign work
- Steering committee - usually 8 – 15 members



COST: Often in-kind or can charge various overhead or administrative costs.



Pre-campaign Resources Needed

Paid staff support – Volunteers will not suffice.

- **COST: From 1 to 3 FTE's** - Depends on size of city/county, in-kind resources available, foundational work already completed, skills/background of staff
- Can include interns, youth, parents – w. stipends
- Tasks – manage meetings, do the work between meetings, coordinate resources
- Skill and credibility of staff major variable in success of pre-campaign effectiveness – look to experienced organizers, political activists, mid-career professionals.





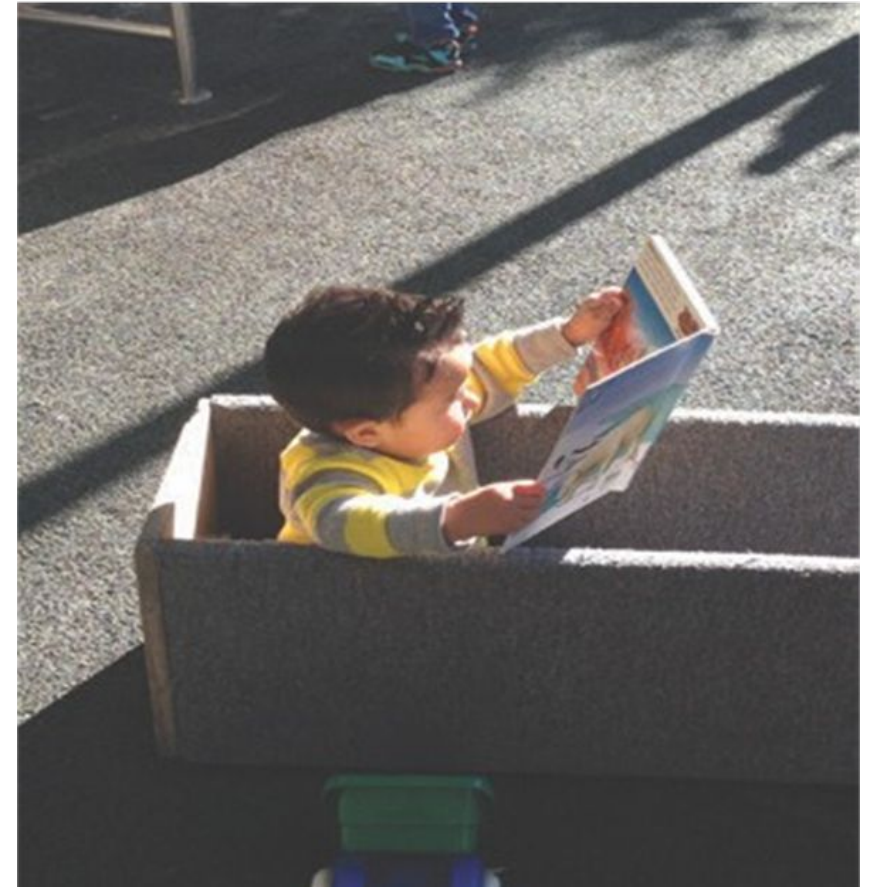
Pre-campaign Resources Needed

Legal support

- **Not just any lawyer** – need high level of expertise for most aspects of work
- Lawyer can draft measure, answer legal questions, manage complex legal complications, provide guidance to getting on ballot, assist in establishing a political committee.

COST: Can range from \$300 to \$500/hour.

Budget \$5,000 - \$30,000 – depending on whether voter initiative or not





Pre-campaign Resources Needed

Volunteer/in-kind support

MOVING FROM ENDORSEMENT TO FULL ENGAGEMENT

- Generates and increases commitment to the campaign
- Saves out-of-pocket expenditures
- Improves quality of work





Pre-campaign Resources Needed

Volunteer/In-Kind – Who can do what?

- Administrative support and project management
- Data Analysis and collection
- Media outreach and social media
- Convening/ facilitating community meetings
- Providing space for convening community meetings
- Presentations to potential allies/community groups
- Community outreach – surveys, door-to-door
- Mailing and graphics
- Covering cost of initial polling
- Sponsor/plan/implement events





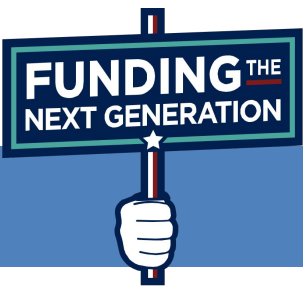
Pre-campaign Resources Needed

Volunteer/In-Kind – Connections, Ability to influence

Suggestion: Do a power map to analyze priorities for outreach

- Neighborhood groups
- Civic organizations
- Businesses/Chambers
- Labor
- Organized parent groups
- Faith organizations
- Political leaders and organizations
- Allies – e.g. mental health, pediatrics, housing, libraries education, childcare





Pre-campaign Resources Needed

Getting on the Ballot

- **COST: From \$5 to \$20 per signature** – Will be the most expensive part of a voter initiative campaign. # signatures needed depends on state and county – will often be 10% of voters in previous election (need to get 15% to ensure validation)
- Can collect in part with volunteers – very challenging.

GREAT RESOURCE – [BALLOTPEDIA](https://ballotpedia.org/Ballot_measure_signature_costs,_2024#Cost_per_required_signature,_2024)

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BUDGET FOR PRE-CAMPAIGN WORK

Example for
moderate-size
city/county
(population 250,000
-500,000)

2 year budget (sample)

- Staff – 1 FTE - \$250k
- Administrative asst. – 60k
- Poll - \$35,000 (one poll, could do more)
- Meetings - \$10,000
- Marketing/media/events - \$40,000
- Legal – \$10,000
- Political consultant (6 months prior to official campaign) - \$20K

TOTAL - \$425,000

With signatures

- Signatures – 20,000 X \$9 = \$180k
https://ballotpedia.org/Ballot_measure_signature_costs,_2024#Cost_per_required_signature,_2024)
- Legal - \$20,000

TOTAL - \$200,000



TIMELINE CAN VARY ALOT

VARIABLES INCLUDE:

- **Level of community support**
 - **Size of community**
- **Tasks already accomplished**
 - **Consensus among**

2 – 6 years in preparation
1 year campaign

Not linear
Many tasks done in parallel



TIMELINE EXAMPLE

RESEARCH

BUILD AND STRENGTHEN THE COALITION

BUDGET ADVOCACY

DEVELOP LEGISLATION

EDUCATE and ENGAGE THE PUBLIC

GET ON BALLOT

 **FUNDRAISE THROUGHOUT** 

KEY TO SUCCESS GREAT PEOPLE!



- Persistence, courage and a true belief in the cause.
- Visionary leader(s) who is knowledgeable, has credibility in the city or county, and is deeply passionate about achieving the goal.
- Skilled staff – e.g., Experienced community activists and/or a talented mid-career professionals.
- “Building a relationship of trust, transparency and sharing the load across the core group of people doing the work.”
Courtney Baltyskyy, San Diego Children First Collective





THANK YOU

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