

Before a Campaign Begins: Mobilizing Your Resources

Children's Funding Institute
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PRE-CAMAPIGN: 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-CAMPA 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.



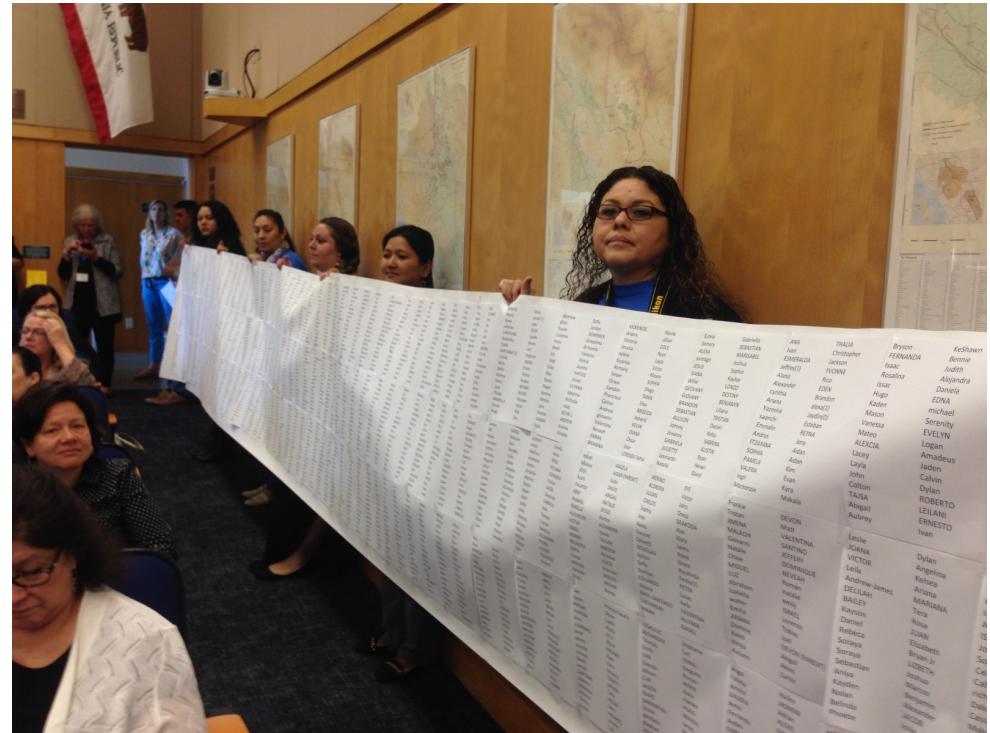
CORE TO SUCCESS - Building a relationship of trust, transparency and “sharing the load” across the core group.



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-CAMPAG N

- 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.





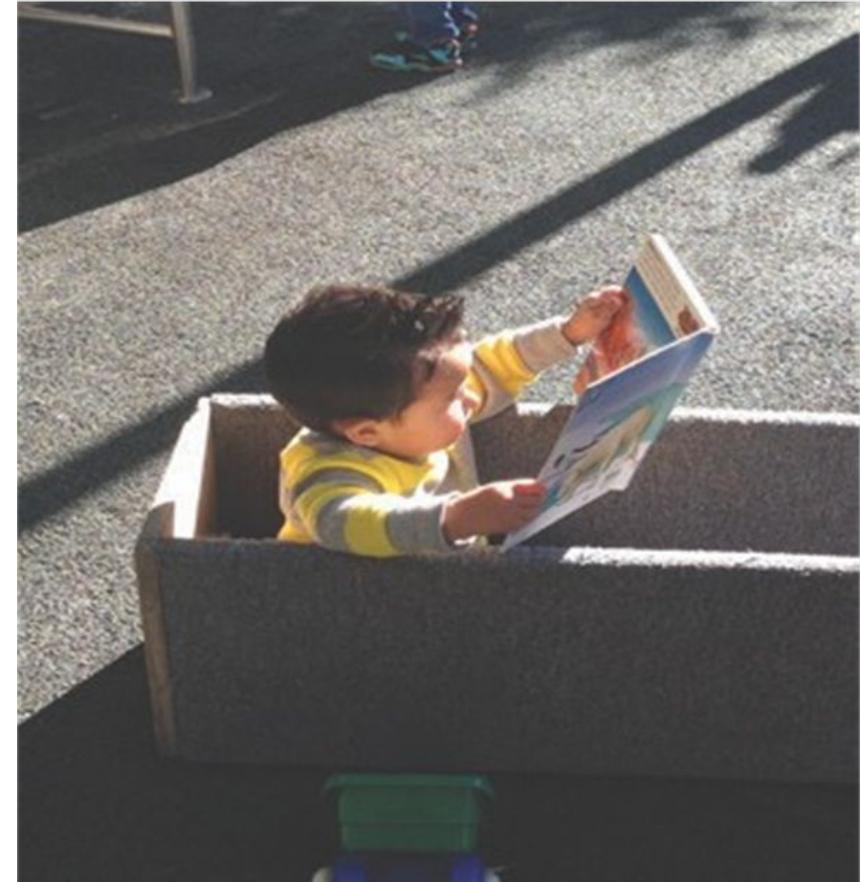
Pre-campaign Resources Needed

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](https://ballotpedia.org/Cost_per_required_signature,_2024)



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](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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