

CELEBRATING THE WIN

- ✓ Thank all of your workers.
- ✓ Publicly thank the voters.
- ✓ Celebrate!



 Alliance Library System

Consulting and Continuing Education
(309) 694-9200

www.alliancelibrarysystem.com

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**REFERENDUM
DOS & DON'TS**

CONSIDERING A REFERENDUM

For a successful referendum, all library trustees must support it. The following should exist:

- ✓ A positive image within the community.
- ✓ A long-range plan with community input.
- ✓ An identified need.
- ✓ Proven response to the community needs and expectations.
- ✓ Proven performance and fiscal trustworthiness.
- ✓ Quality relationships with local media, government, and opinion leaders.

PLANNING FOR THE CAMPAIGN

- ✓ Choose the appropriate election for the library's issue.
 - Fewer people vote in primaries.
 - Other financial issues on the ballot can hurt support for the library's cause.
 - Plan for plenty of time to prepare the campaign.
 - Know local politics.
 - Ensure the issue is the right issue at the right time.
- ✓ Choose influential citizens to lead the campaign, but ensure library administration still exercises control.
 - Create a fundraising committee; no public funds should be spent on the campaign.
 - Form a public relations committee to create brochures and newsletters
 - Establish a "Get-Out-the-Vote" committee.
- ✓ Know the following about the community:

- Demographics
- Lifestyles
- Who lives where
- Voter habits and preferences
- Trend setters

SPREADING THE MESSAGE

- ✓ Keep it short and down to two or three minutes.
 - Every person connected with the campaign should be able to memorize and repeat it anytime and anywhere.
 - The message should move people and encourage long-term investment by citizens
- ✓ Keep the story straight throughout all mailings and speaking engagements
- ✓ Have the following information available:
 - The cost and cost benefits to citizens.
 - Details of what the money will buy.
 - Details about the consequences if the referendum fails. This information should not be presented as punishment or a threat, but as an economic reality.

CONDUCTING THE CAMPAIGN

- ✓ Set a timeline.
- ✓ Target the "yes" voters (users, families with children, groups that meet in the library).
- ✓ Stay on message.
- ✓ Speak to service groups, neighborhood teas, etc.
- ✓ Conduct literature drops and mailings.
 - Six weeks before the election, send mailings or deliver literature drops.
 - Three weeks before the election, mail a hard-hitting publicity piece.
- ✓ Ask supporters to write letters to newspapers' editors.
- ✓ Call supporters a few days before the election and encourage them to vote.
- ✓ Ignore, but do not antagonize, the "no" voters.
- ✓ Correct misinformation, but do not repeat negatives.
- ✓ Be prepared for a last-minute negative media blitz by opponents.