

Harness the Power of Community Engagement for Referendum Success Tip Sheet

Project planning and organizing

- Seek facilitation expertise and coaching from an outside contract. We had great success with TregoEd.
- Create a project plan complete with a timeline all the way to recommendations/decisions. Don't forget to include milestones along the way.
- Identify person(s) responsible for monitoring plan and holding others accountable for reaching milestones.
- Develop an internal and external communication plan.
- Utilize the TregoEd Potential Problem Analysis to assess risks for big meetings and plans.
- Create an online application tool/system to gather community interest in serving on advisory committee(s). Include open-ended questions regarding what each will bring to the committee and why each wishes to serve.

Recruiting and selecting an advisory committee

- From initial communication onward, be specific about role and outcome of Advisory Committee, e.g. are they making recommendations or decisions?
- Have advisory members sign a compact agreement for participation. Agreement can include attendance at most/all meetings, team agreed-upon communication only, use of email/Google Docs for communication, etc.
- Establish norms for advisory committee meetings.
- Establish co-facilitators, trained in decision making tools.
- Limit the size of the Advisory Committee to 15 or fewer members.
- Hire a project coordinator for the implementation phase.

Running the Advisory Committee(s)

- Establish regular meeting times and duration of service on committee.
- If you have a multi-committee effort, make sure bond leaders/facilitators are present each time there is a board of education or other community presentation.

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- Implement communication plan, utilizing visuals and video wherever possible; post updates on website periodically.
- Establish talking points that can be shared beyond the committee at the end of each meeting.
- Consider seat assignments to facilitate productive conversations and keep side conversations to a minimum.
- If a committee member is stuck on an idea, co-facilitator could pull person out for quick conversation; a facilitator could offer to meet with that person 1:1; or that person's idea could be included in a survey to get stakeholder response.

Closing the advisory committee process

- Thank your committee members publicly, individually and as a group.
- Celebrate your success.
- Consider sending a survey to get feedback from committee members about the process.
- Tell your committee members how they can follow the progress of their recommendations or decisions.