

How To Run for School Board and Win Every Time

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By Lew Rockwell May 26, 2021



By Allan Stevo

If you are goofy enough to like face masks or COVID shots, please don't read this. This information is too effective and we have enough goofy people in office already.

If you are cowardly enough to ever wear a face mask for any reason, please don't read this. This information is too effective and we have enough cowardly people in office already.

Everyone else, please read on. This stuff really works.

If you didn't succeed at moving your school board (or any other government body you are focussed on) after months of diligent work on key issues, following yesterday's writing on this topic, there is probably a defect in the system and it's time to change one of the cogs for a more responsive, finely milled, and well oiled version: You!

- 1.) Learn The Date** — Ask your school board administrator when elections for school board are.
- 2.) Double Check** — Contact your country clerk's office and ask the same.
- 3.) Learn The Rules** — Find out the requirements for running from the county clerk's office. Often the clerks will have information packets for people looking to run for office.

Read that packet, keep coming back to it. It's a good way to make sure you follow all the rules.

4.) Confirm Important Details — Every important number, deadline, or detail that I read in packets like that, I always contact the county clerks office to confirm. I like confirmation. I don't want a misprint or a policy update to cause me to miss out on an opportunity to help usher a bad person out of office. Some county clerks will have a lawyer in the office who handles election matters. As you become aware of this person and prove themselves valuable to you, theirs is a direct phone line you will want to have. It is someone you should always feel comfortable turning to for a more in depth understanding of the process.

5.) Make A Platform — Make a clear platform of core issues that you are running on.

If I were running, I would say "Remove all one size fits all health mandates from our schools." That would be my one key issue that I care about and that I would run on and activate others around. There are many other things you may disagree on, but if you and your supporters agree on a core set of issues, you are in good shape. Focus on your key issues. Don't get distracted. Lots of people will want to distract you. Your thoughts on the latest war are not relevant. Your thoughts on the controversial sewer improvements are not relevant. Your political party preference in national politics is not relevant. This is relevant: "Remove all one size fits all health mandates from our schools."

6.) Activate Your Network — Get them out there helping you. If you don't know how to build a network of activists around you, read this, this, and this. Using the techniques in those articles, you can build a network of activists around you that can win a school board seat or which could win a congressional seat, though dare I say it: a school board seat often has more impact. The real day-to-day impact that one person can have on the lives of so many people is so powerful.

7.) No Campaign Manager Needed, But — You don't need a campaign manager for a school board run, you can handle that on your own, but even if it's not necessary to have a campaign manager, with the right person, it makes the campaign so much easier and can have such powerful impact. It helps for one person to have one set of duties (be the candidate) and another person to have another set of duties (manage the organization and be responsible for everything else). Importantly, structure can help you challenge your network and make a loose network into an even more cohesive organization. Don't just appoint a campaign manager (whose job it is to operate the campaign), have a finance committee manager (whose job it is to help bring in checks for supplies), have a treasurer (whose job it is to keep records), have a volunteer coordinator (whose job it is to recruit new volunteers, train them, and activate them), have a coalitions outreach captain (whose job it is to befriend other groups in the community). All that too can be distraction though if overdone. As the campaign progresses, and you hold your planning meetings with your confidantes, you'll see

people gravitate toward roles. Don't be afraid to ask for them to take on a role and to give them a title.

8.) Check With Your Mates — Talk to your confidantes before you run, during your run, and after your run.

9.) No Professionals Needed — You don't need professionals either. Those who you know and have already fought in the trenches alongside will serve you so much better than more than 95% of hired guns. Surround yourself with people from your community and your life who want to achieve the same goals as you. Hired guns can really be a distraction.

10.) Budget Can't Beat Fury — Stay as low budget or as high budget as you want, but realize this, there's hardly no budget that can defeat a well organized grassroots campaign like this one that I am in the process of describing to you.

11.) Voter Roles — Get a copy of the voter registration rolls.

12.) Precinct Maps — Get paper maps of your district from the county clerk. There are ways to do this with software. I still find that paper works better. A map spread out on the kitchen table tends to be easier for many people to visualize the terrain of as opposed to a map on a device.

13.) Knock On Every Door — Knock on every door of every voter in that district. (This is the most important part of winning local office.) I really mean every door of every voter in that district.

14.) Leave A Note — If they do not answer, leave them a letter asking for their vote, signed by you, welcoming them to contact you. Your campaign email address and your campaign cell phone number should both be included. You want to be contacted by people. An important reason to run is to bring good people together in order to change the way the community around you is being run. Those contacts matter so much. If you give contact information, yes a few rascals might reach out, but so many more supporters or potential supporters will reach out. The rascals will help you build thicker skin, the supporters will help you win.

15.) ID Supporters — Identify who your supporters are. Make a list. (This is the second most important part of winning.) Very clearly ask them if they will vote for you. You want a clear yes or no.

16.) Get Contact Info — If they like you, ask for their phone number and email address. (This is the third most important part of winning.)

17.) Keep In Touch — Reach out to your supporters periodically, keep them engaged. This can be as simple as a BCC email once or twice a week to your five supporters at the beginning that lets them know how you are progressing and some of your goals.

And it can grow into an email to your 500 or 5,000 or 50,000 supporters. Let them be part of even your little victories.

18.) Keep Supporters Engaged, An Important Part Of Leading — I really mean engaged. If any supporter says after the campaign “I really wish you would have asked me to get more involved,” then you are doing something wrong. This is a true test of your leadership. Engage a supporter at the highest level of commitment they will be engaged at: financially, time wise, activity wise, vote wise. Don’t waste these precious resources of the people who want to help you win by leaving them inactivated. There is always more work to do, even if it is “Mrs. Johnson at 123 Rothbard Street hasn’t answered the door, will you go knock on her neighbors’ doors and ask if they know how to reach her?” or “Dale Miller is still holding out and not willing to support us, will you go take him for coffee and ask him what’s on his mind?” Most campaigns don’t have time for that level of voter by voter detail, but no campaign should consider its resources over-utilized until it reaches that level of detail.

19.) Election Day Follow Through — Make sure your supporters come out for you on Election Day or by early voting. It is impossible to bother them too much about this. Until they say they have voted for you, keep contacting them to come vote for you. After they’ve said that, invite them to come volunteer on Election Day. The process of getting your supporters to go to the polling place and vote for you is often called GOTV (Get out the vote). It’s one of the more commonly known acronyms used by people in this process.

20.) Put Early Voting Poll Watchers In Place — If you have the man power, have a volunteer present at the early voting locations in your district. Do not ever consider activities like this a waste of time. You are helping someone to develop skills for future civic engagement. A big part of winning in politics and government is just showing up. There are some quiet times just waiting for people to show up. You want your supporters totally comfortable doing that, totally comfortable around the halls of power, so comfortable that they practically consider them *their* halls of power, which they are and which the people in those halls of power want you to forget. A lot of discouragement is practiced by people in those positions in order to try to protect that power. Don’t be discouraged, get your people to show up.

21.) Debrief Volunteers Daily — Every single day debrief people. Don’t let even one person end a shift without someone on your team asking 1.) what went well, 2.) what went wrong, 3.) what would you change for next time? This should almost always be done in an individual conversation. This lets you know if anything went awry that you should know about, but it also is a decent thing to do for the volunteer. This is part of thanking a person, helping them to return the next time, and helping them be even better the next time for you and for other civic activism.

22.) Read The Election Judge & Poll Worker Manual — Long before Election Day, contact the county clerk to get the manual for election officials and poll watchers. Understand this manual. If this is your team’s first Election Day, the manual won’t do the

process justice, but it will be a good primer. **READ THE MANUAL EVERY ELECTION.** There are people who have twenty years of campaign experience who really know what they are doing. They grow each campaign more and more. There are other people who have one year of experience repeated twenty times. They don't seem to ever get to the next level of learning. It can be very hard to tell the difference at first, especially when someone wants you to think they know it all. Don't let some veteran on your team convince you that the manual is not worth reading every single election. There are always little tidbits in there. The tidbits are so plentiful that I think it's a good idea to have every single person on the core team read the manual in preparation for the first Election Day operations meeting.

23.) Have Poll Watchers In Each Polling Place — Have a poll watcher present at each polling place with a list of registered voters, marking down who has come to vote. This has so many useful purposes. Make sure someone is always keeping in touch with them and keeping track of who has come in to vote. This should be done during early voting and on Election Day.

24.) Man The Outside Of Polling Places — Have people who will work outside every polling place on Election Day circulating your material to the people who come in to vote that day and who have not yet made a decision.

25.) Have Command Central — Have a phone number ready to handle any inquiries that day that come in from your Election Day volunteers who are very reachable by phone all day long.

26.) Victory Party — Hold a victory party on election night as the returns come in. Win or lose, have your key players ready in a room, ready to hear the next action steps moving forward. **DO NOT** refuse to run again, do not let them down with a depressing speech. Win or lose, every political campaign is a step toward the next one. Walk into election night ready with, at the very least, your plan A (We won and change begins right here, right now), plan B (We lost and will fight harder starting today), and plan C (The outcome is uncertain, we've come too far to turn back, and we plan to close on this victory).

27.) Canvass The Vote — Have a group of volunteers who will participate in the vote canvass after the election. Spend a day having them trained on how to canvass and irregularities to watch out for. Whether you win or lose, canvass the vote. You are building potential for the next race and the race after that. Since part of the reason to run is to raise up civic leaders from among you who are as comfortable in the halls of power as they are on their own couch, who recognize that they are the ones who legitimately should control the halls of power. By having people canvass the vote each time, you will really have a ready and capable team when a vote canvass is contested and truly matters.

28.) Election Lawyer Ready — Have an experienced election lawyer ready to challenge results if needed. Have a backup to your lawyer as well. You don't want a

political operative lawyer to bail on you at the last minute and to derail your plans. Know where the money to pay for the challenge will come from.

29.) Run Again Starting Immediately — If you don't win, immediately announce your candidacy in the next election. Run until you win. Those who supported you deserve the certainty that you will run until you win. In doing so you will truly build name recognition, build your reputation as a leader in these issues, and build a movement.

30.) Close — Get sworn in.

31.) Propose — Get your important issues on the agenda.

32.) Keep Supporters Engaged — Get your supporters active each time one of your agenda items come up for a vote.

33.) Influence — Sway others on the board.

34.) Recruit — Get others who are likeminded to run for the other board seats.

35.) Execute — Change the school from the top down and from the bottom up.

36.) Stay Agile And Excel — Don't rest on your laurels, don't become part of the problem, leave if you grow jaded. Remain a person that everyone who voted you in considers an open, honest, and capable person who keeps their word.

Conclusory Remarks

Virtually anyone can win an election following this process.

The most important from the list above are

- 1.) Knock on every door
- 2.) Identify supporters
- 3.) Get email and phone numbers
- 4.) Get them out to vote

Then the most important civics lesson for being a force multiplier is this: Use your list to stay involved.

The process is not rocket science. Any good and diligent person who wants to win a seat from school board to state senate can do it this way and it sometimes even works for offices bigger than that.

Local politics really matters. That has been shown resoundingly since the Ides of March 2020. Regardless of what happened in Washington, D.C. or on television, it was the sheriff, the district attorney, the school board, and the town council that had so much ability to stand up and make their community wonderful and free. Alternatively, they were also the ones who could choose to go along with a more sinister spirit of fear.

Those who spread a spirit of fear through our communities after the Ides of March 2020, need to be replaced and never allowed to hold public office again.

It's time for them to go.

Source: *How To Run for School Board and Win Every Time – LewRockwell*

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