Creating a Culture of Political Advocacy and Political Activism

Presenters
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Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Housekeeping
- Competencies & Themes
- Common Language & Understandings
- Advocate-to-Activist
- Diverse Organizing Activists
- A Plan & Taking It Back Home
- Closing Thoughts
Diverse Activist Organizing Program

Small Group Discussion

Culture  Language  Students

Teachers  Parents  Educators

volunteer

community

assist

calls

coaching

Elections

POLITICAL

programs

teamwork

Door-to-door
campaigns

vote

leaders

candidates

Grassroots

training

campaigns

canvassing

leadership

issue

web

assisting

giving

members

learning

commitment

weekends

organizing

ELXIONS

assist

volunteer

team

helping
Advocacy

Advances the cause of public education through social justice and how it benefits our students and members’ professional needs and rights.
Advocacy Competency Theme/Level

Leverages advocacy practice/Level 2: Mobilizing and Power Building
Engages in power mapping and implements high impact and culturally competent advocacy plans and strategies.

Engages community around issues supporting student learning/Level 3: Agenda Driving
Organizes a collaborative mobilization plan around shared interests of union, educational communities, and legislative bodies.
Interprets and acts on social justice initiatives/Level 3: Agenda Driving
Analyses and strengthens alliances with a diverse set of stakeholders to implement, support, evaluate and communicate social justice initiatives.

Leads public education policy reform/Level 3: Agenda Driving
Engages and persuades all stakeholders around shared interests in national, state, and local public education policy and reforms.
Acts as a political advocate/Level 1: Foundational
Participates in basic campaign actions, including canvassing, petition signing, and e-mail.

Acts as a political Advocate/Level 3: Agenda Driving
Equips members to become more effective advocates by getting them involved in political process (at the level that makes sense for them) and providing valuable education, information and research.
Managing Complex Change

1. **VISION**
2. **SKILLS**
3. **INCENTIVES**
4. **RESOURCES**
5. **ACTION PLAN**

- **CHANGE**
- **CONFUSION**
- **ANXIETY**
- **GRADUAL CHANGE**
- **FRUSTRATION**
- **FALSE START**
Conventional Wisdom

What do you Advocate for?

What is an Activist?
Activity: Table Talk . . .

- Brainstorm issues your local/Council is currently focusing on.

- Write issues on large chart pack.
Activity: Table Talk . . .

Table Group

1. Select a specific issue to work on at your table group
2. Re-write the issue in the middle of chart paper.
Activity: Table Talk . . . Square It Off . . .

Table Group

1. On smaller post-it notes, individually write strategies needed to accomplish the issue.
2. Write for five minutes or until told to stop.
3. Begin sharing what is on the post-its, one person, one strategy at a time until all post-its have been placed around the ISSUE in the middle of the chart.
Activity: Table Talk . . . Square It Off . . . Plan It Out . . .

Table Group
1. Once all ideas have been placed on the chart, identify common themes; group accordingly.
2. Organize issues/themes around main main issue.
3. Prioritize issues/common themes.
4. Transfer strategies to a work plan.
Elements of a Great Diverse Organizing Activist Program

The Plan

The Ask

The Training

The Growth

The Culture
The Diverse Activist Volunteer Plan

How to prepare.

▪ The purpose for activist (community, educators/ESP’s, volunteers, families).

▪ The tasks and roles for which they will be responsible.

▪ How they will be managed?

▪ How they will be recruited?
The ASK
How to involve diverse activists.

- Connect with Issues, Interests and Values.

- Match responsibility to Capacity, Commitment, Language, and Culturally Relevant.
The “ASK”
How to engage member activist volunteers in . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driven</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDEOLOGY</td>
<td>• Committed to the particular issue – will work hard, but want the issue out in front all the time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIALY</td>
<td>• Need opportunities to get to know other activists, lead groups or do outreach – work must be fun or they will leave.</td>
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<td>LOYALTY</td>
<td>• Commitment to organization and bring experience to the work – need to be heard, and sometimes don’t want to change.</td>
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<td>OPPORTUNITY</td>
<td>• Looking for opportunities to do and learn new things – can be given risky tasks because they will work hard to grow into them.</td>
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<td>RECOGNITION</td>
<td>• Need proper respect, acknowledgement and support.</td>
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<td>SUCCESS</td>
<td>• Need clear goals, strategies, and milestones – want to know how they fit in, progress to goal, and when to celebrate.</td>
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The Training
How to bring diverse member activists onboard!

- Orientation to the campaign/organization.
- Training on the specific skills, (i.e. language/culture/family/zip code) systems they’ll be using.
- Mentoring and feedback on volunteer work.
Retaining Member Activists/Volunteers

• Be organized!
• Explain the purpose of the task.
• Provide training.
• Be inclusive.
• Share inside information.
• Show results
• Have fun!
The Culture! The Language!

- Be inclusive and welcoming.

- Cultivate & nurture a grassroots community inclusive of all zip codes.

- Give specific and purposeful heartfelt thanks.

- Articulate the impact of their work social justice cause, civic commitment, etc.

- Take feedback seriously.

- Exude joy, playfulness, and passion.
The Growth
How to develop diverse activist leaders.

Skills Training/Coaching

Commitment

Leadership Development

Capacity

Organizing Efforts
Activists Recruitment Scenario

BACKGROUND

Your state association is relatively new to grassroots political organizing, but wants to capitalize on this fall’s elections to engage diverse candidates.

The turnout for this activity is new for some members who have not participated in an activity of this type before.

OPPORTUNITY: To turnout at least 10 - 15 volunteers make candidate phone calls next week.
Activity: Activists Recruitment Scenario

**WHY?** Engage diverse candidates/elected officials on education issues.

**WHAT?** Volunteers will turnout for a candidate phone bank using an education story/message.

**Small Groups**

**The Plan:**

a) Discuss how you will motivate and/or assist volunteer activists to commit to making phone calls.

b) List strategies, logistics, messages, materials, etc.

**Recruitment:** You have 10 minutes to recruit.

**Phone Bank:** Begin; recruiters will see how many volunteer activists show up.
Conventional Wisdom

What do you Advocate for?

What is an Activist?

Why do you volunteer?
Session Outcomes

The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:

- Organizing a collaborative mobilization plan
- Engaging stakeholders around shared interests
- Helping members become more effective activists
Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session.

“Thank you for coming!”