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How to Win Votes in a School Election

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In many ways, school elections are just like elections anywhere else. To win over voters, you need to reach out to as many voters as possible. You will also need to work hard to make sure people know who you are, and why they should vote for you.

Part
1

Deciding to Run

1 Decide what position to run for. Student governments have many offices with different responsibilities. Make sure you know what you what the position does, and what you will be able to do once you get there. There are limits to what you can do while in office, so knowing your responsibilities can keep you from making foolish campaign promises that you can't keep.

2 Decide why you are running. School offices can be a great opportunity to help your fellow students and make your school a better place. Ask yourself why you want the office and why should people vote for you. If you don't have a clear reason for running, you won't have anything good to tell your fellow students.

- If you are looking for specific areas that you can improve in your school, talk to authority figures, such as your teachers or the principal, current members of the student government, or even your fellow students.

3 Develop a theme. Come up with one to three big reasons why people should vote for you, memorize them, and be prepared to tell them without hesitating to anyone who asks. People have short attention spans, so while you may have plenty of big ideas for fixing the school, you need to be able to address them quickly. Also, make sure to have a positive attitude towards anyone you may come across!

- Writing a slogan, a short tagline for your campaign, is a great way to keep your ideas short and simple. It can be serious or funny, but make sure it is about you. It needs to remind people who you are, and that they should vote for you.

4 Create a network. Talk to your friends about running, make sure they think it is a good idea, and ask for their help in running.^[1] You won't be able to do this alone, and it looks good if the people who know you best will vote for you. Your network can also help with more practical activities, such as designing and making posters, passing out buttons, and encouraging their classmates to vote for you.

- Encourage your network to bring in more friends to help. There is nothing wrong with additional support.

Part
2

Campaigning for Votes

1 Create a campaign team.

2 Tell other students you are running. Talk to friends and other acquaintances. Introduce yourself to people you don't know, and convince them to vote for you. People won't vote for you if they don't know who you are.^[2]

- Not everyone will want to talk to you about the election. That's fine, just let them walk away. You don't want to be pushy or overbearing.

- Don't get so focused on winning over one small group that you forget larger ones. You probably can't win over everyone, so don't be discouraged by the votes you don't get.

3 Encourage people to vote. Sometimes the hardest thing is actually getting people to participate in the election. If you are the one pushing them to vote, they may be more likely to vote for you.

4 Advertise yourself. You and your campaign team should make posters, buttons, t-shirts, and other items that will let other students learn your name even if you don't get to talk to them. Most importantly, your name and the position you are running for should be big and clear on everything you make.

- These items are great places to use a slogan if you made one.
- For posters, create and hang as many as possible. Make sure they follow any guidelines the school sets, as you don't want school officials taking them down.
- Buttons and stickers can go on all kinds of items, and schools may not put the same limits on them as they do on posters. You can also pass them out with other small trinkets, which are great ways to help students remember you.

5 Be confident, happy, and friendly. To get any votes at all, you need to have the right attitude. Act as if you believe you will win, and that the school will be a better place with you in office.

6 Prepare a speech. Your school may give you the opportunity to address your fellow students at some point before the election. If so, be ready with a short speech that focuses on your campaign themes, and reminds people why they should vote for you.

- Stay within the time limits the school gives you. You want to get as many of your ideas out there as you can, but people have short attention spans, and nobody will listen if you talk too long.
- It is a good idea to practice your speech before giving it. Ask your friends if they will listen to you read it out loud. This can help give you the confidence to speak in front of a large group and provide useful feedback.

Community Q&A

Question

How do I prepare a speech?

Community Answer

Just start with some base ideas, like why you want to be elected and what leadership skills you have. Then, after you have all your base ideas, start adding little bits like some humor and a slogan, maybe.

Question

What should I write as a speech about why I am running for presidency?

Community Answer

To most of your fellow student voters, your reasons for running aren't going to be nearly as important as what you can do for them. Why you're running is because you saw ways the school could improve, and you're dedicated to make the following list of great changes that will benefit all...Making sure, of course, that you're able to deliver.

Question

What do I do if students are rude towards me?

Community Answer

Don't sink to their level by being mean back. Be kind and friendly to everyone, even those who are disrespectful. If people make rude comments, ignore them. You're much more likely to get votes if you maintain a positive attitude at all times.

Question

What if I am too shy to tell people I am running?

Community Answer

Put up a poster or flyers. It can be a great way to spread the message without literally calling a lot of attention to yourself. However, if you are running, it would probably help you to get yourself out there and connect with people.

Question

How do I get votes in a school election if I don't have many friends?

Community Answer

Get votes by making friends. Just start saying hi to everyone in the halls and act cheerful and kind to people you somewhat know, but aren't officially friends with, yet.

Question

How do I win votes in a school election if I am not allowed to give out campaign materials?

Community Answer

Focus on your speech. Make it memorable, and talk about all the things you want to do to improve the school. Try incorporating some jokes, or even a catchphrase that people can repeat back to you (nothing silly, something that actually relates to your campaign). Also, network with your classmates! You don't have to give stuff out to make an impression on someone.

Question

How can I do a superb speech for a school election?

Community Answer

Check Write a Speech for School Elections for some good pointers.

Question

How do I win votes if I'm the underdog?

Community Answer

Use being an underdog to your advantage, people love to root for an underdog. Also, try talking and getting to more people. The more people get to know and like you, the more votes you will get.

Question

How do I get the school to vote on a school fun club?

Community Answer

Make it sound exciting and fun. Advertise the club, and make announcements, spread the news, etc. Tell your friends about it and get their friends to tell their friends, and so on.

Question

My friends are voting for someone else. What can I do?

Community Answer

If your friends are voting for someone else, you can convince them to vote for you and not someone else, and make more friends by expanding your friends circle. This might not happen in the time span you have, but you can talk to more people so that they know who you are. Make as many posters, buttons, t-shirts, etc., as you can. Remember, if your friends are not voting for you, you're all alone until you get a proper campaign team, which can be difficult without the people who know you best by your side.

Tips

- Be nice to everyone, including the other candidates. Elections can get heated sometimes, so it is and treating your opponents well can look good to voters.
- Enjoy yourself. The fate of the world isn't at stake, a school election should be fun. If you aren't enjoying yourself, it probably isn't worth doing. Plus, people tend to respond well to those who are friendly, and look like they are having a good time.
- Try doing nice things for people and showing them you are a nice person.

Warnings

- Don't give out bribes. In most schools, that's a good way to get kicked out of the election. Plus, people won't be voting for you and your ideas just because you gave them something.

References

1. <http://www.localvictory.com/strategy/winning-school-elections.html>
2. <http://www.localvictory.com/strategy/winning-school-elections.html>