

REFERENDUM PLANNING



8 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Passing a referendum to maintain and improve schools is a challenge many districts face. At Miron, we recommend taking a strategic approach to referendum planning, so you can feel confident going out to your community. Here are eight tips for getting your district referendum-ready:

#1 START EARLY.

Don't rush the process! Referenda that allow enough time for planning and strategy development have a better chance of success.

#2 BUILD A STRONG TEAM.

The road to referendum is decidedly a team effort! Professional partners, administrative staff, educators, citizen committees, and school board members will bring strengths and unique insights to the process.

#3 START TALKING.

Consistent, positive, year-round communication with the school community is the best way to build trust and transparency. Parent emails, positive news stories, and social media posts that celebrate success are just a few ways to start the conversation. Use facts about enrollment, capacity and maintenance to support key messages.

#4 START LISTENING.

Engage, network, and listen to feedback from parents, staff, and community members about school district facilities. Conduct a community survey prior to establishing the referendum question. A community-driven solution with input from many stakeholders has the best chance of success.

#5 ASSESS THE NEEDS.

Conduct a comprehensive facilities assessment of all district buildings, keeping in mind energy-efficient and sustainable solutions for immediate and long-term needs.

#6 EVALUATE THE FINANCIAL IMPACT.

A referendum is ultimately a financial conversation with taxpayers. Consider financial factors such as the existing debt structure, debt payment drop-off, state aid, and the impact on the levy when assessing needs and priorities.

#7 BE OPEN TO NEW IDEAS.

By keeping the dialog open with staff, parents, taxpayers, and school board members, new ideas and approaches that best reflect the values and priorities of the community will rise to the top.

#8 KEEP IT SIMPLE.

The language of architecture, construction, and school finance can be confusing! Use clear, concise, and consistent language to communicate the needs, the process, and the financial effects of a potential referendum.

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